

# Teflon Mayor

MARION BARRY

First in a series  
on black mayors

Salim Muwakkil reports

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# Duvalier is gone, but Haiti remains in political turmoil

By Anne-christine d'Adesky

Haiti held its first open elections in 30 years on October 19, but the occasion was hardly a joyous one. Instead, the election reflected a climate of political insecurity and random violence that has gripped the island over the past two months. Less than 5 percent of the country's nearly six million eligible voters took part in the Constituent Assembly election, and many of those who cast ballots were government employees. The vast majority of Haitians boycotted the polls as a protest against the provisional military-civilian government that replaced ousted dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier in February (see *In These Times*, April 23 and May 7).

Prior to the elections, civilian political leaders stepped up their efforts to replace the Conseil National du Gouvernement (CNG) with their own government. Meanwhile, dozens of small protests took place throughout the country as rumors of a coup filtered through the capital, Port au Prince. More protests followed the elections, but for now the government remains in control, supported by the army. The elections, however, signaled to the CNG that its grip on the population is slipping. The mass boycott sent this clear message: either the government changes or it goes.

The CNG is headed by Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy, former army chief of staff under Duvalier. Namphy, along with Interior Minister Col. William Regala, was handpicked by Duvalier to lead Haiti in a peaceful transition toward democracy. Instead, the pair has been denounced by civilian political leaders as Duvalierists and accused of protecting known criminals. The third and only civilian CNG member, Jacques A. Francois, a lawyer and former diplomat, is widely considered to have little or no say in Haiti's political affairs.

The generally non-violent protests have closely followed a wave of random violence in Port-au-Prince. There are also fears that former members of Duvalier's volunteer militia are free to take up their past campaign of terror, and allegations linking former members to the CIA.

The political tension has been heightened by a stagnating economy. Since Duvalier fled on February 7, about 120,000 jobs have been lost in the manufacturing sector alone, and layoffs continue in many areas.

Tourism, once the bulwark of the economy, has been badly affected by the spread of the deadly disease AIDS since 1982. Today an estimated 10 percent of the six million Haitians have tested positive for the HTLV-III virus, and the number of documented AIDS cases stands at more than 150,000—an incidence 25-100 times higher than in the U.S., according to a recent confidential document from Haiti's Public Health Ministry.

The question of leadership is at the core of the present political crisis. To date no Haitian political candidate has garnered the popular support or espoused the long-term political vision needed to pull the country out of its present quagmire. The recent election, which could have given candidates a focus for political organization, was marred by the CNG's decision to hand pick one-third of the 61 Assembly members to "assure diversity." No top political leaders participated in a protest of the move. In the end, there were only 100 candidates for the 41 Assembly seats. In most districts, there was only one candidate to vote for.

Those elected did not represent any specific political leaning as a whole, and the majority of them have no previous political or governmental experience. Some are community leaders, others work in business or other fields. While they may gain new status in their local districts because of the elections, their future effect on national affairs appears minimal. "The mass of Haitians were completely indifferent to this election," said Jean Rigaud, a political observer. "It doesn't mean a thing."

## Lack of unity

Political activists wasted no time getting their parties organized after Duvalier fled Haiti. Presidential candidates announced their campaigns with fanfare. But for the moment, it appears unlikely that opposition parties will be able to find an alternative to the CNG. Two attempts to replace it have failed because the opposition parties could not unite behind candidates. And some leaders questioned the validity of assuming power without elections, since that is one of the complaints about the CNG.

Eight presidential candidates are now considered serious contenders for the elections scheduled to take place by February 1988 and none of the CNG members appear likely to run. Politically, the candidates vary from left to right, populist to Duvalierist, but they share the economy as their basic focus. The support for candidates depends largely upon the class or community they belong to, and their individual ability to broaden that appeal will be an important measure of their success. Leslie Manigat, Marc Bazin, Gregoire Eugene and Hubert de Ronceray are candidates favored by better-educated, moneyed Haitians and the exiled Haitian communities in the U.S., Europe and Canada. In the countryside and among poorer urban Haitians, Sylvio Claude and Constant de Pognon are waging a campaign centered around issues familiar to the masses: hunger, unemployment, illiteracy, disease, lack of housing. On the right, at least two candidates with ties to the old regime are running: Edouard Francisque and the

church-supported Rosny Desroches, a former minister under Duvalier. Their potential draw is unknown, but the fact that they are choosing to campaign at all is a clear sign that although Baby Doc is gone, Duvalierists remain a powerful force in Haiti.

The big question behind the upcoming election is: what is the role of the *real* triumvirate of Haitian power—the army, the Catholic Church and the U.S.? Namphy appears to be in control of the army, despite continuing rumors of dissension. The Catholic Church's role is more difficult to assess. On August 15 New York's Cardinal John J. O'Connor visited Haitian church leaders to discuss splits in the Haitian clergy regarding the political situation. That same day U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz arrived to sign accords with Haitian businessmen on American investments. The twin visits left islanders worried that the vacuum of power that followed Duvalier's flight had given U.S. interests free rein in Haiti.

The entire truth is more complicated than that. Recent testimony by Georges Salomon, Haiti's former ambassador to Washington, indicates that U.S. officials considered a "contingency plan" in January when Duvalier's hold was weakening. It included transferring U.S. soldiers of Haitian origin to the U.S. Southwest for possible use to maintain order in the nation. That the U.S. was looking after its interests then and now is nothing new. What is different is that the Haitian people aren't falling asleep after ousting Duvalier. So far, it is not clear what presidential candidate the Reagan administration will back. Thus the reigning political confusion might be viewed as healthy and self-protective for Haitians.

According to a longtime analyst of Haitian politics, any of the current presidential candidates would, if elected, "probably wind up being as bad as Duvalier." The comment was based on the fact that most of them have focused on their public image rather than on the issues.

The fault is not theirs alone. For 30 years Haitians have lacked models for political organization. The country is 80 percent illiterate, and campaigns to educate voters are small compared to what is needed. The average Haitian is overly aware of the basic issues, but the means for solving them baffles even the experts. The International Monetary Fund has urged the CNG to adopt an austerity program and to clean up a corrupt bureaucracy. It is difficult to convince a starving Haitian about the long-term merits of "tightening the belt."

## A new constitution

There have been some bright spots since Duvalier's ouster. The CNG not only set the date for presidential elections, but also established a time-table for writing a new constitution by Feb. 7, 1987, the revolution's one-year anniversary. Also, the struggle for justice has resulted in the conviction of three members of the "Tontons Macoutes," Duvalier's notorious volunteer militia. Other "Macoutes" are in jail awaiting trial, while many escaped the country.

But the biggest potential catch is Duvalier, who, along with his clan, is temporarily safe in France. A team of international lawyers has successfully documented the illegal transfers of \$115 million of

# THE STORY INSIDE

Haitian public funds for personal use by the Duvalier-Bennett family. Duvalier's family fortune has been estimated at \$300-900 million.

In May investigators obtained a temporary freeze on Swiss bank accounts in which they believed Duvalier had stored the bulk of his money. The Swiss courts recently put a permanent freeze on the accounts, which have an unknown value. One investigator says it is thought to be "very substantial."

Lawyers believe that Duvalier has also stashed away a part of his fortune in Monaco. In France investigators have targeted several apartments belonging to Duvalier and his cronies that are estimated to be worth several million dollars. Yet due to what some critics call "stalling tactics" on the CNG's part, there is an unknown but estimated large sum of money that will never be recovered because Duvalier and his aides acted so quickly to hide it.

It seems likely that some of that badly-needed fortune will eventually flow back to Haiti after the lawyers subtract their fees for the long investigation. But the funds won't arrive in time to ease the present crisis, which seems destined to grow more serious. Namphy still has several short-term ploys he can use to diffuse the tension: toss out six controversial Duvalierist diplomats, create new jobs or reduce the price of consumer goods. But these measures won't sustain the CNG unless it devotes itself to reopening lines of communication between the National Palace and the majority of Haitians. The issue is Haitians' loss of faith, not with the revolution but with the leaders like Namphy who refuse to make a break with the past.

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By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

**W**HAT DISTINGUISHES THE U.S. and South Africa from all other advanced capitalist countries? They are the only ones that do not have a national health system and that administer the death penalty. But last month the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments for a death penalty case that could overturn existing statutes.

The case, *McCleskey vs. Kemp*, is being brought on behalf of a black man convicted in 1978 of killing a white policeman in a furniture store holdup. McCleskey's suit, presented by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, argues that in Georgia the death penalty has been administered in a manner that discriminates against blacks and also violates the 14th Amendment's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

McCleskey has an extremely strong case. Three professors, led by Iowa University law professor David C. Baldus, have conducted extensive statistical analysis of all the murder cases in Georgia between 1973-79. Even after discounting for 200 mitigating and aggravating factors, they found that murderers of whites were 11 times more likely to receive a death sentence than murderers of blacks. They also found that while 22 percent of blacks who murdered whites were sentenced to death, only 3 percent of whites who murdered blacks received death sentences.

Henry Schwarzschild, the director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Capital Punishment Project, called *McCleskey vs. Kemp* the "Dred Scott case of the death penalty." "If we can't make it with this evidence, we can never make it," Schwarzschild said.

### Society's endorsement

Two different constitutional arguments against the death penalty were articulated in the landmark *Furman vs. Georgia*. In that 1972 case, brought by several Georgia blacks sentenced to death, the court ruled that existing state statutes violated both the 14th Amendment guarantee and the 8th Amendment guarantee against cruel and unusual punishment. The five justice majority did not offer a unified opinion, however.

One argument, advanced by Justice Douglas and supported by Justices White and Stewart, was that the death penalty was being administered capriciously and unfairly—Furman's defense had demonstrated that blacks were disproportionately sentenced to death—and for crimes like rape that did not merit death. Douglas wrote, "A law that stated that anyone making more than \$50,000 would be exempt from the death penalty would plainly fall, as would a law that in terms said that blacks, those who never went beyond the fifth grade in school, who make less than \$3,000 a year, or those who were unpopular or unstable should be the only people executed. A law which in the overall view reaches the same result in practice has no more sanctity than a law which in terms provides the same."

Justices Brennan and Marshall advanced a different argument: that the death penalty was in itself a "cruel and unusual punishment" and should be abolished irrespective of how it was administered. They had to face the uncomfortable fact that the death penalty is acknowledged within the Constitution as a legitimate form of punishment ("No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime," the 5th Amendment begins). But Brennan tried to get around it by arguing that the "import" of the "cruel and unusual" clause was "indefinite" and required constant re-interpretation in view of "new conditions and purposes." He then argued that the "progressive decline in, and the current rarity of, the infliction of the death penalty demonstrates that our society seriously questions the appropriateness of this punishment today."

At the time *Furman vs. Georgia* appeared

# The black and white of capital punishment



to spell the end for the death penalty. But Douglas, White and Stewart had left an opening that the state legislatures attempted to end-run by writing new statutes, which through elaborate procedures appeared to eliminate the capriciousness and unfairness of the old. Meanwhile, Douglas retired, and voters—under the impact of deteriorating cities and Republican "law and order" cam-

paigns—endorsed pro-death-penalty candidates and referenda, effectively undermining Brennan and Marshall's position.

Then, in 1976, the court ruled 7-to-2 in *Gregg vs. Georgia*, with Brennan and Marshall dissenting. It found that Georgia's amended death penalty statute, which set certain conditions for the use of the death penalty and created different stages of hear-

ings and appeal, was constitutional. Writing for the majority, Justice Stewart cited new statutes passed by 35 states as signifying "society's endorsement of the death penalty."

### Pros and cons

Baldus' statistical evidence is important precisely because it shows that the 1973 Georgia statute on which the *Gregg vs. Georgia* ruling was based has not succeeded in ending racial discrimination—although the locus of discrimination has changed from the race of the perpetrator to the race of the victim. Similar statistical studies in other states with post-*Furman* statutes have revealed comparable patterns (see accompanying story).

These studies suggest not only that the present elaborate statutes are unfair, but also that any statute cannot escape the prejudices—racial or otherwise—of juries, judges and prosecutors. If courts accept the premise that the death penalty—because of its final and irrevocable nature—must be administered fairly or not at all, then they must throw out the penalty entirely.

If the actions of the lower courts are any indication, however, judges who support the death penalty's morality will find reasons for upholding its constitutionality. The Georgia District Court, which heard McCleskey's first appeal, ruled that Baldus' statistical analysis was "ill-suited to provide the court with circumstantial evidence of the presence of discrimination." Then the Court of Appeals ruled that a statistical proof must be "sufficient to compel a conclusion that [a discriminatory practice] results from discriminatory intent and purpose."

**"If we can't make it with this evidence, we can never make it," said an American Civil Liberties Union official.**

Both of these rulings in effect require that opponents of the Georgia statute establish the prejudice of individual judges, juries and prosecutors—an impossible task and one that the Supreme Court has not required of 14th Amendment cases.

Death-penalty advocates have taken a different tack against Baldus' findings. Fordham University professor Ernest van den Haag argues that they are irrelevant to the 14th Amendment. "Although unjustified per se," van den Haag writes in the *U.C. Davis Law Review*, "discrimination against a class of victims need not, and here does not, amount to discrimination against their victimizers. The pattern discriminates against black murderers of whites and for black murderers of blacks."

These obviously tendentious arguments would appear to augur success for death-penalty foes, yet they are pessimistic that the Supreme Court—now bolstered by Reagan appointees Sandra Day O'Connor and Antonin Scalia—will side with McCleskey. And even if the court rules in McCleskey's behalf, that may mean only that Georgia and other states will amend their statutes so that they appear to rule out the kind of discrimination revealed by Baldus' findings. The death penalty will remain intact until another "Baldus" surveys the court's decisions.

Thus *McCleskey vs. Kemp* may at best offer only a reprieve to death-penalty opponents. If they want to abolish the death penalty, they will have to do so not in the judiciary—where not simply the present court but the Constitution itself seems stacked against them—but in the political arena. There the question is not one of constitutionality, but of morality.

-J.B.J.

## An unequal distribution of death

Last year the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* commissioned Tulane University sociologist M. Dwayne Smith to conduct a study of the men and women convicted of murder under Louisiana's revised death penalty statutes. Smith found that in Louisiana people who kill whites are at least twice as likely to receive the death penalty. Smith also came up with other signs of capriciousness: people who kill women are more likely to receive the death penalty than people who kill men; and murders committed and tried in the suburbs are more likely to result in the death penalty than murders committed in cities.

Some of the cases the report describes reveal the travesty of the present system. In 1984 a black man with no previous arrest record was sentenced to die for

shooting and killing a prominent 58-year-old white woman while stealing her purse in a supermarket parking lot. By contrast, in 1981 a black man suspected of drug dealing bound and then stabbed to death an entire family. The family was black, and the murderer received a life sentence.

In another case, a 19-year-old man was sentenced in December 1979 to death for shooting and killing a 54-year-old woman while attempting to rob her in a suburban shopping center parking lot. In 1982, however, two men kidnapped the manager of a store in the same shopping center, drove him to a park inside the city limits and then shot him dead as he pleaded for mercy. Two New Orleans juries convicted the men, yet sentenced them to life imprisonment.



# INSHORT

Joel Bleifuss

## Marching about town

The Great Peace March for Global Nuclear Disarmament received quite a welcome last month in New York City. Some 700 marchers, carrying colorful banners and exuding all sorts of enthusiasm, crossed the George Washington Bridge on October 23 and set up their "Peace City" in the Bronx. They spent three days marching around Manhattan, visiting schools and holding rallies. In Central Park hundreds of supporters joined them on October 24 for their walk to Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza and a rally in front of the United Nations. Now on the last leg of their 3,200-mile transcontinental trek, the marchers are heading for a final celebration and rally in Washington on November 15.

## Thought police nab professor

Besides guarding our borders from illicit narcotics and dark-skinned immigrants, Attorney General Edwin Meese's Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has recently been at work maintaining purity of thought. On August 28 an INS judge ruled that Margaret Randall, author of *Women in Cuba*, and *Sandino's Daughters* and currently a professor of women's studies at the University of New Mexico, must leave the country of her birth by December 1. Her crime? According to the INS, "Her writings advocate economic, international and governmental doctrines of world Communism." In 1967, while living in Mexico, Randall gave up her U.S. citizenship in order to find work. In 1984 she returned to this country and applied for permanent residency. Randall's husband, parents and oldest son are all U.S. citizens. The Center for Constitutional Rights in New York City, which is handling her case, is appealing the deportation.

## Journalist caught at border

On September 24 Tom Ronse, a Belgian journalist for the Flemish language daily *De Morgan*, was arrested at Newark International airport. His crime? Ronse, who had come to the U.S. to do a story on the American left, was found to be in possession of subversive literature and handwritten notes. Ronse was detained under the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act that denies entry to foreigners who were ever a member of or affiliated with a Communist or other subversive organization—the same law cited by the INS in Margaret Randall's case. Ronse was held overnight in a "small, windowless office" that, according to him, contained "a dirty cot with no blankets" and a TV on which he watched the Daniloff drama's denouement. Ronse was released the next morning into the custody of the Belgian consul general. But the INS spent a week examining his research material before allowing Ronse to go on his way.

## Unlike the Soviet Union...

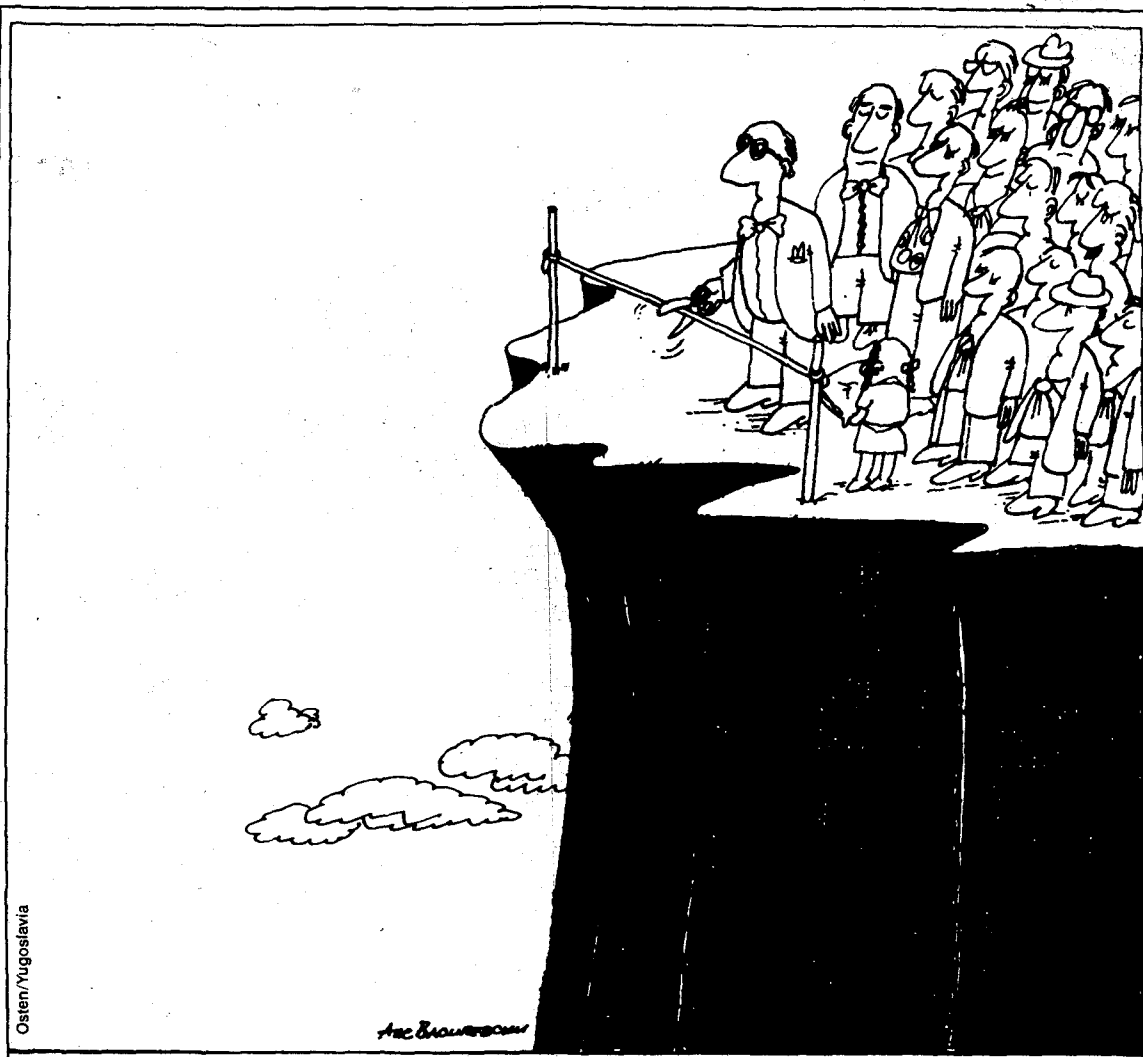
On October 12 Patricia Lara, a journalist from the Colombian paper *El Tiempo*, was arrested by the INS at Kennedy International airport. She was on her way to an annual journalism banquet at Columbia University that honors reporters and publications "for distinguished contributions to the advancement of inter-American understanding and freedom of information." Her crime? Lara, an author of a book on Colombia's guerrillas, is listed in the INS' "Lookout Book." The book, a child of the McCarran-Walter Act, is continually updated (now out in video) and contains the names of 40,000 people who are "excludable" for suspected Communist or subversive beliefs or actions. After holding her for four days—at one time in a maximum-security cell—the INS ruled that Lara might "engage in subversive activities" during her visit and, consequently, could not remain in the U.S.

The very day that ruling came through, Charles Z. Wick, director of the U.S. Information Agency, published a column in the *Christian Science Monitor* milking the Daniloff case for all it was worth. In it he wrote, "Unlike the Soviet Union, the U.S. does not restrict entry of foreign journalists because we don't like what they write about us."

## A sign of the Times

In *These Times* may have its problems, but at least it doesn't administer drug tests. The *New York Times* does—and has since the early '70s. Urinalysis is part of the pre-employment physical examination to which all serious applicants are subjected. The test is not repeated for active employees, with the exception of truck drivers, who give up their urine for what the American public now seems to accept as standard practice.

We encourage readers to send news clips, story ideas or short articles to "In Short," c/o *In These Times*, 1300 West Belmont Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60657. Please include your address and telephone number.



## Putting apartheid on the half shell

The boycott of Royal Dutch-Shell is working and could force the company to withdraw from South Africa, according to John R. Wilson, chairman of Shell South Africa.

In a recent speech at a Cape Town conference of senior Shell officials, the chairman cited a number of reasons why the boycott has been effective.

"Shell is the only company having to handle an international campaign against it," he said. "Other companies have their problems, it's true, but these are mainly localized.... But Shell is faced with an onslaught from no fewer than nine different countries, and the number is growing."

Another reason for the boycott's effectiveness is that it has linked the concerns of U.S. and South African work-

ers, the Shell executive said. From the beginning, boycott organizers have stressed that slave labor conditions in countries like South Africa not only are morally wrong but also undermine job security and labor standards in the U.S.

This link, Shell's Wilson said, has provided "another barb to add to the anti-South African lash." He said the boycott gives people the impression that "not only was Shell union-bashing in America but it was doing the same thing in South Africa, where it was accused of using slave labor to boot! And it was this slave labor which was furthermore depriving good, solid American citizens of their jobs."

Royal Dutch-Shell was chosen as an international anti-apartheid target because it

supplies essential fuel to the South African economy, as well as the country's military police. South Africa has no oil of its own.

Local coalitions in dozens of U.S. cities have been distributing leaflets at Shell stations, posting billboards, pushing businesses and government agencies to stop using Shell credit cards and organizing withdrawal of investments from Shell, among other tactics.

The campaign has drawn national support from most of the major churches, unions, civil rights organizations, women's groups, environmentalists and citizens' networks.

"Shell's position is not comfortable," said Wilson. "Strategically, one couldn't chose a better or bigger target."

—Matt Witt

## Weapon destruction hits public nerve

In the 1986 defense budget, Congress ordered the army to destroy the entire U.S.

stockpile of chemical weapons by 1994. This should have been good news to those worried about the existence of more than half a million such weapons in eight installations around the country. But because the Army wants to burn the nerve and mustard gas munitions, perhaps in their current locations, some communities near the depots fear that incineration will be more dangerous than continued storage of the aging and sometimes leaky devices.

Opposition to the Army plan is particularly strong near the 15,000-acre Lexington Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky. "When the Army first announced they might be building an incinerator here we became very concerned because of all the so-called incidents and accidents," says Kathy Flood, who lives near the depot. A poor safety record

at the installation, which contains conventional weapons as well as nerve gas rockets, has led many nearby residents to question the Army's plans. They believe that various disposal methods, and the possibility of moving the munitions to a remote site for destruction, are being ignored.

Since the Army has requested permits to burn in Kentucky before having officially decided on a location, the state attorney general is considering legal action against the service. "They appear to be heading toward a decision before getting all the data," says Assistant Attorney General Frank Schuppe.

The Army, however, insists it hasn't decided where to burn the material. "We believe that we are being as open and honest as we can be, and—despite what some people think—a decision has not been made yet," says Public Affairs Officer Marilyn Tischbin at Maryland's Aberdeen Proving

Ground.

The method of incineration is also at issue. The Army says it has chosen a complex system involving rotary kiln technology and an extensive pollution abatement system. Schuppe thinks it may be a bad choice. "There are alternative technologies which may be superior and which we should pursue. It's not just a question of where."

Will Collette of the Citizens' Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes in Arlington, Va., agrees with Schuppe, but says, "the Army is in a bind" because of the 1994 deadline. He thinks this is the reason the Army may be making "hasty decisions." Officer Tischbin admits that "there could be better technologies than the one we've chosen, but given the 1994 date we have no time to pursue them."

The Army is scheduled to make a final decision on the program in January.

—Jeremy Solomon



SEATTLE

**M**AYBE IT'S BECAUSE THIS city's archbishop Raymond Hunthausen is just that, an archbishop. Maybe it's because the Vatican's recent move against him is so unprecedented. Maybe it's because the Seattle prelate is tremendously popular with his flock, even with many who disagree with him. Maybe it's because Hunthausen has chosen to keep developments surrounding the ongoing Vatican investigation of him as public as possible.

Whatever the reasons—and obviously there are many—the recent Vatican decision to strip Seattle's archbishop of significant decision-making authority seems to be crystallizing into the prism through which many of the earlier Vatican "clampdown" measures are being brought to light. Consider the following:

- Rome's yanking of Father Charles Curran's credentials to teach as a Catholic theologian at Catholic University of America did not surprise anyone.

- A Vatican denouncement of the popular catechism "Christ Among Us" by Anthony Wilhelm, a former Paulist priest, brought only a brief and muted outcry, even though it had been used for many years and had sold almost two million copies.

- There was little grassroots sympathy for the nuns called on the carpet by Rome for signing a 1984 *New York Times* ad contending there is more than one legitimate view on abortion for Catholics.

- John Paul II's 1981 commissioning of a major review of the country's seminaries drew little attention other than from those directly involved, despite the potentially wide-ranging impact.

- Little attention had been paid to increasingly clear signs that Roman authorities desired tighter control of operations and curricula of U.S. Catholic colleges and universities, despite the implications of such a move on the schools' academic image and church-state (read federal money) relations.

- In August there was barely a blink as Washington, D.C., Archbishop James Hickey jettisoned the 1968 "norms of dissent" that were painfully and painstakingly developed by the American bishops' conference in the wake of Pope Paul VI's controversial birth control encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*.

Considered alone, the above incidents generally have been perceived as Vatican pruning of church excesses. Taken as a whole and juxtaposed with the Hunthausen case—especially last week's developments (see accompanying story)—that pruning, according to many observers, is starting to threaten the tree. Powerful voices in the American church have been raised already, including that of Milwaukee's well-known Archbishop Rembert Weakland.

Addressing dissent in the church in two recent columns in his own archdiocesan newspaper, Weakland alluded to the Hunthausen case as well as others, and warned that Vatican attempts to impose orthodoxy in the past have led to "much cruelty, suppression of theological creativity and lack of growth." And in an October 7 *New York Times* story Weakland said he is encountering "a certain disillusionment that the momentum of Vatican II will be lost" and that American Catholics could begin to simply walk away from the institutional church in large numbers.

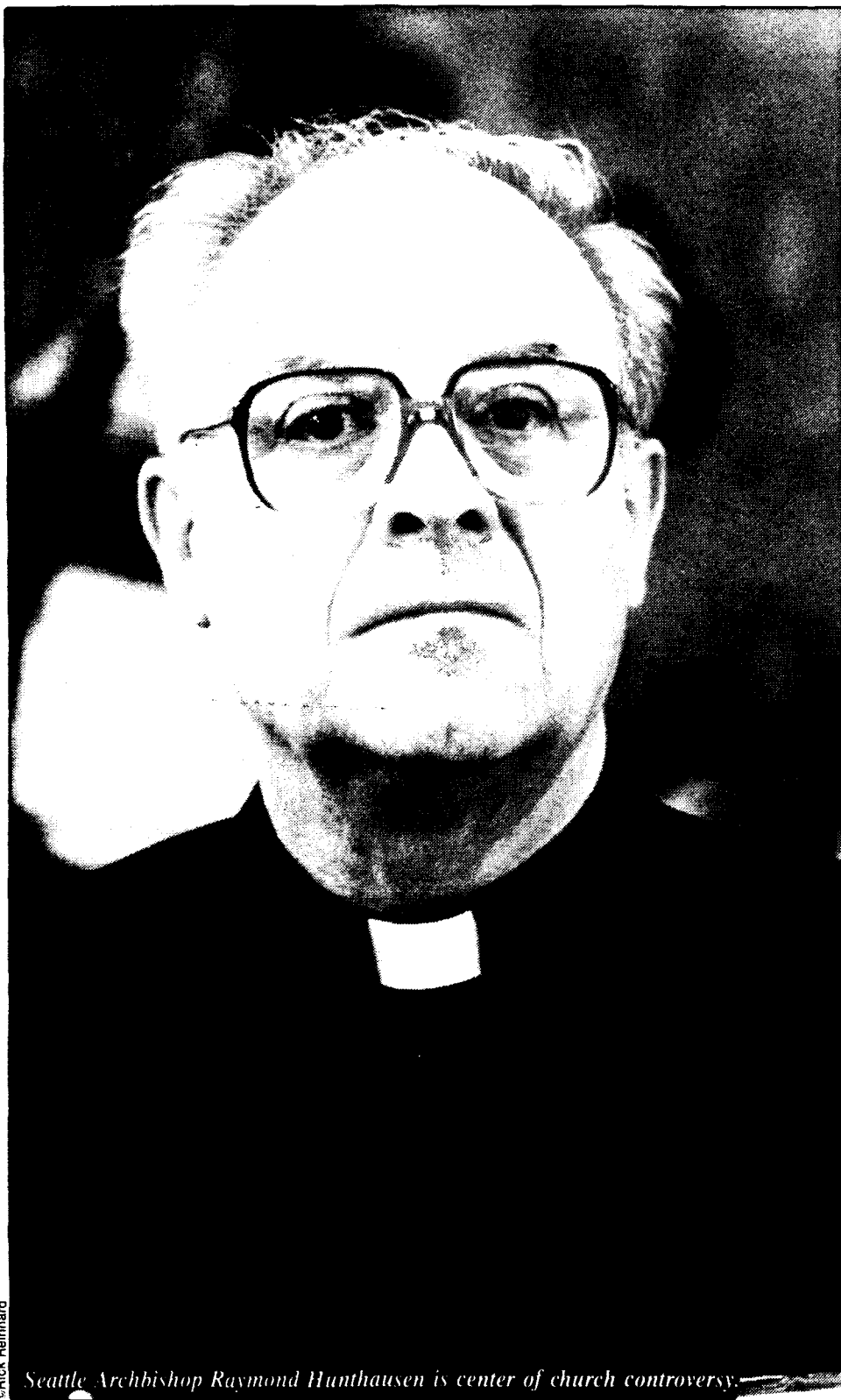
Weakland, who heads the U.S. Catholic bishops' committee that has been drafting the group's controversial pastoral letter on the American economy, has emerged as a clear-thinking and articulate churchman, capable of hammering out compromises. Significantly, he is one of 10 candidates for president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB). That election is scheduled for the November 10-13 NCCB meeting in Washington, D.C.

Another candidate is D.C.'s Archbishop Hickey, the man who headed the Vatican investigation of Hunthausen and the Seattle archdiocese.

So what's the scandal? For Hunthausen support —, it begins with the fact that the

## HUNTHAUSEN

# Catholic dissenters under church attack



Seattle Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen is center of church controversy.

Vatican has ordered him to assign final decision-making authority to Auxiliary Bishop Donald Wuerl in five areas: in applying church marital doctrine; in following liturgy, the central worship act; in training seminarians and continuing education of priests; in returning priests who are leaving the ministry to the lay state; and in adhering to church positions on moral issues in health care institutions and ministering to homosexuals.

Apparently it was a discussion concerning this last area that has led to revelation of the Vatican's real plans for Auxiliary Bishop Wuerl, who was installed in January. When he came on board rumors circulated that he was a Vatican watchdog. But at the time Wuerl and Hunthausen both emphasized their unity, and Wuerl even told reporters and others that he took his orders from Hunthausen.

## Vatican riposte

The office of Pope John Paul II's personal representative in the U.S. claims Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle was directed to relinquish much of his episcopal authority because "the Holy See considered him lacking the firmness necessary to govern the archdiocese," and because he did not seem to grasp the importance and depth of Vatican concerns.

The statement came in a document dated October 24 and made public October 28, titled "A Chronology of Recent Events in the Archdiocese of Seattle." The document was distributed to the media and mailed to the country's more than 300 bishops by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) at the request of the U.S. Vatican Embassy. The narrative was authored by Archbishop Pio Laghi, papal nuncio to the U.S.

The document indicated its release was

prompted by the Seattle developments, which were widely being "interpreted as portraying this whole process as a one-sided affair."

Archbishop Hunthausen, responding to the document on October 28, said that his understanding of the events "differs significantly" from how they were described in the document. Referring to the text's detailing of some of the Vatican's concerns about the Seattle archdiocese, the archbishop said in a brief release, "I would even have to say that I learned of some of the judgments and conclusions only by reading the 'chronology' itself."

He said he would not attempt to discuss the varying views immediately, but would take his "specific comments and judgments to other more appropriate forums."

The NCCB has scheduled a closed-door session on the Hunthausen issue for its November 10-13 meetings in Washington, D.C. Hunthausen will have a chance to speak at that session, according to conference sources.

—D.M.

Yet at a spring meeting discussing the merits of a local ordinance calling for protection of gay persons' rights, Wuerl reportedly broke ranks with Hunthausen. That move ultimately led to discussion between Seattle's two prelates, the U.S. papal nuncio Archbishop Pio Laghi and the Vatican. The Vatican apparently sided with Wuerl.

In a September letter to archdiocese parishioners, Hunthausen admitted that he was in the dark about Wuerl's authority. "...At the time of his appointment I did not understand the nature and extent of Bishop Wuerl's role. After considerable discussion with the Holy See, it was confirmed that it was the understanding of the Holy See in December 1985 when appointing Bishop Wuerl that he not only assist me by assuming a general oversight and responsibility for these five areas, but that he actually be delegated by me to have complete and final decision-making power over them."

To date, Hunthausen says he has never seen a copy of the Hickey/Vatican report. Efforts to "correct" alleged abuses in the archdiocese have had to be based on letters from Laghi and from Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the strongly traditionalist head of the powerful Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Catholics in the Seattle archdiocese have responded with increasing confusion, disillusionment and anger. Speculation has centered on how much Wuerl knew of the true extent of his mission all along: was it a gradual clarification or had he been sandbagging?

On September 12 Wuerl and Hunthausen met with area priests in a closed session that led to a followup with the area's priests' council, a group of 20 priests. From that gathering a two-part plan was developed. The first is that Wuerl and Hunthausen in some fashion will communicate to Rome how the transfer of power is affecting the area. (Although the media interpreted this to imply that a dual trip to Vatican City was forthcoming, that is not true.) The plan's second part is that the archdiocese continue to respond to Vatican concerns, especially in the five areas listed above.

The strategy was announced at a September 26 meeting of priest representatives and other archdiocesan leaders. Tensions reportedly ran high after Wuerl accused some priests and chancery executives of trying to pull the carpet from under him, and the process he claimed he and Hunthausen are trying to follow.

Meanwhile, a group calling themselves Concerned Catholics gathered more than 13,000 signatures on petitions calling for restoration of full powers to Hunthausen. Those petitions were presented to Hunthausen and Wuerl at an October 1 meeting with Concerned Catholics leaders.

The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported on October 2 that Wuerl had not only told the group that their actions and the consequent media coverage was divisive, but also that he hoped they would cease their opposition to efforts to maintain church unity.

On October 14 Hunthausen sent another letter, this one mailed to all registered Catholics in his archdiocese. In it he alluded to the two-part strategy and hinted that full authority might again be vested in his office. He and Wuerl, he wrote, "with the full support of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and the Council of Priests, are committed to approach the Holy See for a forthright discussion with the proper authorities on the issues and process of the [Vatican] visitation and the reaction of confusion and scandal that has occurred for so many people in the archdiocese. Our discussion will also include a review of the steps we have taken to address the concerns of the Holy See in the hope that the governance of the archdiocese might be returned to normal as soon as possible."

Two significant questions on the Hunthausen situation loom. Will the U.S. Catholic bishops address the issue openly at their meeting this month? And what kind of back-drop will the controversy create for next year's papal trip to the U.S.—a trip scheduled to include the West Coast?

Dan Morris is a frequent contributor to the national Catholic press.



By Diana Johnstone

ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF its first big demonstration in Bonn, the German peace movement is as strong as ever. On October 11, 180,000 people turned out for a demonstration against cruise missiles at Hasselbach in the sparsely populated Hunsrück region where U.S. nuclear missiles are based.

Peace movement coordinating committee spokesman Andreas Zumach called the birthday party a "gigantic success for the peace movement" and "the prelude to further measures." Two years ago Zumach led efforts to set aside mass actions for a period of reflection. NATO officials rejoiced that the peace movement was "dead." The Hasselbach action, however, showed that pausing to "think" has not killed the movement.

The movement was expected to be deflated when NATO went right ahead with its deployment of U.S. Pershing II and cruise missiles, despite massive popular opposition and exemplary demonstrations in the autumn of 1983. It is true that German peace workers have lost a lot of their illusions. Conscientious objector Roland Jahn, who was jailed in East Germany for his anti-militarist activism before coming to West Germany in 1983, said that many pacifists came from East Germany to the West "believing they could be politically effective here, and then fell in a deep hole. From news coverage they had a completely false image of the effectiveness of movements in the West." East and West, people feel powerless, Jahn said.

Even so, they turned out. A focus of the demonstration was the Hasselbach Wall, built on August 8—exactly 25 years after the Berlin Wall—to protect the cruise missile base there. Demonstrators covered it with anti-nuclear graffiti.

#### Still going after all these years

Speakers stressed that nothing was to be expected from the Reagan-Gorbachov summit going on at the time in Reykjavik. More

## WEST GERMANY

# The peace movement is still living...and learning

skeptical than ever, the movement is still alive, still able to mount a mass demonstration but searching for new and varied means of combatting the arms race.

The ongoing demonstrations against the nuclear fuel reprocessing plant being built at Wackersdorf in Bavaria can also be considered part of the peace movement inasmuch as the new plant will produce plutonium. In a question and answer session in the Bundestag October 7, Social Democratic Party (SPD) deputy floor leader Wolfgang Roth argued that the only reason the government insisted on going ahead with the controversial plant was to keep open the option of manufacturing nuclear weapons.

Research Minister Heinz Riesenhuber said the Wackersdorf plutonium would be "too dirty" for weapons. In an interview in *Die Tageszeitung*, prominent peace researcher Alfred Mechttersheimer agreed. But, he added, "In 10 years or less the technical process for refining plutonium will be worked out. Then the danger is acute." The Wackersdorf plant is due to be completed about the time the nuclear weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty expires in 1995.

Mechttersheimer said the military value of the Wackersdorf plant was growing faster than the construction work. It is no coincidence that the Wackersdorf plant is in Bavaria, where the state's Prime Minister Franz-Josef Strauss had hoped to create a West German nuclear arsenal when he was defense minister back in the '50s under Chancellor Conrad Adenauer. Strauss vehemently opposed the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Recent revelations have shown that in 1957, then Defense Minister Strauss signed a top secret "arms triangle" agreement with his Italian and French counterparts for the development and production of "modern weapons" along with construction of a uranium enrichment plant.

Mechttersheimer told *Die Tageszeitung*: "There is a political logic in the Federal Republic that points in the direction of an option for a German or West European nuclear armament.... There is a change in the consciousness of this country's political elite, aiming at greater independence, a rebirth of the thinking that already in 1957 played a major role in Adenauer and Strauss' clear interest in atomic weapons."

## The movement is looking for new and varied means of combating the arms race.

Perhaps it even has to do with the peace movement that created a general atmosphere in which a demand for an independent policy vis-à-vis the U.S. took on weight. In the heads of politicians all the way deep into the SPD an idea is ripening that the only way to get loose from the U.S. is to have independent nuclear armament.

The paradox is that this "anti-American" idea is exactly what the Reagan administra-

tion wants: a nuclear-armed, politically right-wing Germany will presumably be a useful ally.

Strauss was re-elected prime minister of Bavaria on October 12, but for the first time he will have to put up with the presence of Green Party members in his state legislature. The Greens did much better than they had hoped, winning 7.3 percent of the vote and 16 seats. The opposition to Wackersdorf is generally believed to have strengthened the Greens in Bavaria.

The Bavarian election's big loser was the SPD, whose 27.5 percent was its worst showing since World War II. This was a danger signal for the party's middle-of-the-road strategy personified by Johannes Rau.

The SPD's platform for the January Bundestag elections was highly influenced by the peace movement. Yet there is a risk that if Rau's watered-down, lukewarm campaign produces disappointing results at the polls in January, the SPD right wing will make a comeback by arguing that "moderate voters were scared away by the radical program."

It is certain that the SPD continues to be under pressures that are not altogether visible. *Der Spiegel* recently ran a report about CIA efforts to discredit the party's main representative in the peace movement, Wolfgang Biermann. The CIA complained to the SPD that he was a "security risk" and a likely KGB recruit as a "Soviet agent of influence" because of his contacts with Soviet officials—strictly in the line of his duties as head of the SPD-backed Initiative for Peace, International Compromise and Security—and his heterosexual but lively love life.

Since Biermann was brought to Bonn by Party Secretary Peter Glotz—in keeping with former Chancellor Willy Brandt's policy of absorbing the "new social movements" as a way to reinvigorate the party—the CIA effort to discredit Biermann by typical McCarthyite insinuations can be interpreted as part of a broader effort to destroy the delicate links that have been forged between the SPD and the peace movement. ■

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[Vol. I (1982), which focuses on the social sciences, history and philosophy, was published by McGraw Hill.]



By Chris Norton

## SAN SALVADOR

**W**HEN THE EARTH TREMBLED here on October 10, it further rent the physical and social fabric of a society already highly polarized and strained by war. Analysts predict that the earthquake, which left more than 1,000 dead and an estimated 200,000 homeless, will not only be the year's dominant political event, but will affect the ongoing civil war's outcome.

Despite an influx of relief aid from abroad, the Duarte government—renowned for both corruption and incompetence—will be hard pressed to channel effectively the aid to the neediest sector: the poor whose inadequate housing crumbled during the quake. This is the social base that once supported President Jose Napoleon Duarte and which has become progressively disillusioned at his unfulfilled promises.

Duarte, however, soon turned over the relief efforts to the right-wing private sector, hoping to avoid charges of corruption—an interesting comment on the Duarte government, which has pretensions of being motivated by Christian values—and to head off criticisms from the right, with which Duarte continues to have rocky relations.

His relations with the right have been strained recently by a new tax on net wealth aimed at the rich. Previously the private sector had forced Duarte to remove the tax from a package of economic austerity measures he implemented in January. Currently, however, the right is having a hard time resisting the tax, which was urged by the military.

The military, playing an increasingly important role in running the country, reportedly urged Duarte to turn over relief to the right. According to Defense Minister Eugenio Vides Cassanova, this would show potential foreign donors "that the money will be treated with total honesty."

The Catholic Church, not confident that the private sector-led relief effort would respond to the poor's needs, set up its own relief effort that provided food and basic construction materials to quake victims days before the government opened its warehouses.

Despite the inadequacy of its own efforts, the government continues to view independent relief efforts with suspicion—especially those seeking to channel aid to grassroots community groups. Two planes carrying relief aid from Los Angeles-based Medical Aid to El Salvador were granted landing rights in El Salvador only after spending nearly a week on the ground.

## Chaos abounds

Meanwhile, the army, despite its emphasis on image-boosting, seems to have lost a major public relations opportunity by doing little to aid the initial rescue operations. Indeed, the initial rescue efforts were totally chaotic, with little leadership in evidence until Guatemalan fire-fighters appeared on the scene. Later, experienced international crews, some of them tempered by rescue efforts in last year's more severe Mexico City quake, arrived to help.

In the beginning, only the Red Cross and the Catholic Church were distributing food. "No [government] help had arrived there," said academic Ignacio Martin Baro regarding an initial survey the Jesuit Central American University had conducted about the relief efforts.

"They're [the government] worried about their war," said one resident of a poor barrio that hadn't received any aid. "All it cares about is the war. It doesn't care about us."

Still, the U.S. Embassy continued its usual cheerleading. "The government's done remarkably well, and I think it will continue to progress," said U.S. Ambassador Edwin Corr.

When the government eventually opened its warehouses of AID-donated food, usually provided to refugees, the Treasury Police, who had been put in charge of the city, started handing out food to the homeless along with propaganda harangues against the guerrillas.



Adam Kufeld

## EL SALVADOR

# Earthquake likely to shake up civil war

For their part, the guerrillas immediately offered a unilateral ceasefire, but government operations continued and the ceasefire was finally called off on October 21.

The Duarte government and its U.S. mentors are acutely aware of how the Nicaraguan earthquake in 1972 spelled the beginning of the end for dictator Anastasio Somoza, whose blatant theft of relief aid

and profiteering on the rebuilding of Managua turned even the nation's elite against him. And they have not forgotten that the Mexican government was also weakened by its inability to respond to last year's severe earthquake. But conducting an efficient relief effort might be difficult for the Duarte government, which has lost much of the social base necessary to launch an effective effort.

Jesuit scholar Martin Baro points out that the reconstruction will call into question the nation's inequal distribution of land and housing. For example, will the homeless be told to rebuild their hovels in the squalid gullies they formerly inhabited?

Thus the government's challenge is to show that it can effectively help the poor rebuild their lives, and yet maintain its control. By giving the private sector control of reconstruction, it hopes to defuse right-wing criticism of the government's efforts.

The left, of course, is hoping to take advantage of the crisis—to demonstrate the government's incapacity and to expand its own influence in urban areas, where open organizing hasn't occurred since 1980, when government-sanctioned death squads forced the left underground. How successful each side will be is an open question. ■

**Chris Norton** is *In These Times'* correspondent in El Salvador.

## El Salvador's contra connection

Last month's downing of a contra plane in Nicaragua underscored what has long been an open secret—the use of the Salvadoran military airbase Ilopango as a transfer point for supplies destined for the Nicaraguan contras. Despite this, President Jose Napoleon Duarte continued to deny—somewhat lamely—that the C-123, two-propeller cargo plane shot down over Nicaragua had taken off from El Salvador. "We have no information on that. I have asked the (armed forces) high command and they say no," Duarte says.

Yet captured American crew member Eugene Hasenfus admitted that the plane had taken off from Ilopango loaded with weapons to be dropped to contras in southern Nicaragua. Hasenfus said that he had flown at least 10 other flights out of both Ilopango in El Salvador and the U.S.-built Aguacate air field in Honduras near the Nicaraguan border.

The disclosure of the role of Ilopango air base in the U.S.-directed war against Nicaragua is an embarrassment to Duarte who constantly accuses Nicaragua of militarily supporting the Salvadoran guerrillas, but has said he does not support contra aid because he doesn't believe in intervention in the internal affairs of another country.

Diplomats and other sources say that

the Salvadoran Air Force has reportedly allowed the contras to use several warehouses to store shipments before they are reloaded onto smaller planes bound for the contras. These sources say that permission to use the warehouses was given by the head of the Salvadoran Air Force, Gen. Rafael Bustillo, the powerful rightist commander who has been closely linked to the contra effort.

The contras have used Ilopango at least since 1983, when U.S. officials admitted the CIA was using it, along with some Salvadoran pilots and loaned Salvadoran C-47s bought with U.S. military aid, to resupply contras. Indeed, flight papers found on a plane that crashed after bombing Managua international airport on Sept. 8, 1983, showed the flight had taken off from Ilopango. The Salvadoran Air Force also allowed the contras to use air and sea attacks from Ilopango during 1984, according to the *New York Times*.

The airbase was also used to ship supplies to ex-Sandinista contra leader Eden Pastora, who was based in Costa Rica. But CIA supplies to Pastora were cut off when he resisted merging his forces with the main CIA-supported contra force, the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), claiming they were controlled by ex-Somoza National Guard. Contra flights

out of Ilopango reportedly picked up again in late 1984 after the Honduran government restricted contra shipments through its territory in what many observers saw as an attempt to extract more U.S. aid. Hasenfus says the contra supply operation uses at least five planes, including three large military transports.

On April 24, 1985, five European and U.S. mercenaries were captured in Costa Rica trying to link up with the FDN contras. At the time, U.S. citizen Steven P. Carr said that he was brought from Miami to Ilopango Air Base in El Salvador on a large DC-3 cargo plane loaded with weapons for the contras.

According to Carr, the weapons were off-loaded at Ilopango into warehouses and he then continued on to Costa Rica in a smaller plane. Recently the Costa Rican government has cracked down on contra support lines in Costa Rica. This has forced the contras to try to beef up their forces along the Costa Rican border.

The Salvadoran government, like the U.S. government, officially denies knowledge of the contra operation (see *In These Times*, Oct. 29). Privately, the Salvadoran military is angered at being left holding the bag in the wake of U.S. denials of involvement. It still isn't clear if the operation is official government policy or the initiative of Gen. Bustillo. But most observers think the flights couldn't take place without the tacit support of both the Salvadoran military and U.S. officials. —C.N.



Stanton Dwellings (below) and Greenleaf Gardens (opposite page) are two of D.C.'s most troubled housing projects.



*The big city black mayor came into existence in 1967 with the election of Carl Stokes in Cleveland, Ohio. Since that time, black chief executives have been elected in many of this nation's major cities and in more than 270 other smaller municipalities. Are there problems unique to black mayors, and if so, how have they coped? Because their elections were widely considered extensions of the civil rights movement, are black mayors perceived as something more than politicians and should they be? How have they affected the lives of their black constituents? These are some of the questions that will be examined in a series of articles on black mayors, the first of which begins this week.*

By Salim Muwakkil

#### WASHINGTON

**D**ESPITE UNRELENTING MEDIA attacks on his scandal-plagued administration, Marion Barry appears headed for a third term as mayor of the nation's capital. His popularity among the city's black residents—about 70 percent of the population—is expected to offset easily his growing estrangement from white voters, most of whom rejected him in the September primary.

But while Barry remains popular in D.C.'s black neighborhoods, his candidacy has incited little enthusiasm. Many blacks here seem more resigned to his leadership than inspired by it; his is a popularity by default.

Barry's major challengers this November are Republican Carol Schwartz, an at-large city council member, and Brian Moore, an independent. Both serious underdogs, they've attempted to gain visibility by targeting attacks directly at the incumbent's major areas of vulnerability. Schwartz has spotlighted Barry's alleged connection to corruption and condemned him for what she has termed "ineffective policies" in fighting crime, drug abuse and the other major peeves of the urban middle class. She is packaged as the voice of the white Washingtonian, worried about the city's declining quality of life.

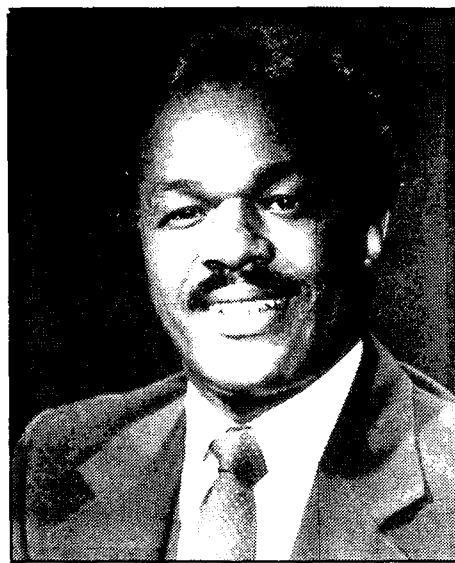
Although Schwartz' positions are too liberal for the Reaganite label, she's received encouragement and money from the capital's reigning Republicans. She also has received the endorsements of the Fraternal

Order of Police (the Afro-American Police Officers' Association split ranks to endorse Barry) and several business groups in the District.

Moore, a community organizer and health-care consultant, has attacked Barry from the left. He's denounced the administration's public-housing policies for containing an anti-poor bias; he's charged the mayor's drug enforcement programs are "punitive and unconstitutional"; and he's damned Barry's urban development plans for slighting neighborhoods in favor of downtown interests. Moore's criticisms carry more political weight with Barry's primary constituency than do those of Schwartz, but the merits of both their arguments pale before the fact of their race. Since both are white, their mayoral quests are inherently counterrevolutionary, according to the political logic of many D.C. blacks.

#### The conspiracy

Before 1974 residents of this predominantly black town were ruled by a federal government that was virtually all white. In those days only Congress could raise the District's taxes, and city commissioners, who were appointed by the president, had to appeal to Southern Congress members for funds to provide basic services. The bitter fight for self-government had strong racial overtones. Much of the opposition came from Congress members whose racist motives were barely concealed. When D.C. won self-rule in 1974, most blacks interpreted it as a victory over a form of racist col-



onialism.

Since that milestone is a mere 12 years behind them, the city's black community is reluctant to hand the reins of government back to white hands. "We know that white folks are just itching to regain control of this city, but we're not going to let that happen without a serious fight," says Michael Lampley, a resident of the Greenleaf Gardens housing project in Southwest Washington.

His sentiments are echoed by blacks from across the class spectrum who, though they may have little else in common, share the notion that whites are scheming to reclaim the city. "It's no secret that they want to move us out," he adds. "They're just waiting for the right time to make their move and some laxness on our part."

The fear that whites are conspiring to dispossess black leadership has compelled many blacks to throw their support to Barry unconditionally. "A lot of black folks in this town are blinded to the mayor's faults by the threat of a white takeover," says Garth Tate, publications director of Dance U.S.A. and a long-time D.C. resident. "Many of us understand the tremendous potential for powerful black leadership in this city and we don't want to lose the chance to establish that on some foolish throw of the political dice."

After all, he points out, "Washington has the highest percentage of educated and middle-class blacks of any other city in the country. If any black community anywhere can develop the wherewithal to make a significant mark, it's this one." Tate adds that although blacks have expressed various levels of frustration with Barry's administration, they probably will continue to support him as long as whites comprise the major opposition.

"The mayor has some problems dealing with D.C.'s housing projects and most of us in the black community have not called him on it," says Nazeer Al-Ugdah, a black businessman who lives near the Stanton Dwellings project in the Anacostia neighborhood. The city has nearly 12,000 public-housing units that provide shelter for about 60,000 people, or 10 percent of the city's population. It is widely regarded as one of the country's worst systems. In a recent speech, Barry conceded that his administration had failed to deliver on some of the improvements he promised for the city's public housing, and he announced a new plan to create a separate agency to deal with the projects' problems.

Poor management of public housing has been a thorn in the administration's side for almost as long as Barry has been mayor. But like so many of the other troubles that have tarnished his tenure, it's an inherited problem.

Those hand-me-down deficiencies are not unique to Barry. Most black mayors elected during the last 20 years have had to cope with similar situations. Demographic changes, the decline of cities' industrial capacities and shifts in priorities of federal programs have helped cloud the economic climate of most major cities. After surveying the myriad of problems that

# The Tef Ma-

## No controversy for Washing

confronted black mayors once they assumed power, many wondered whether they would be the cities' undertakers or saviors. That they had to be either indicates what high expectations greeted their various elections. For Barry, who had to deal with the legal and financial peculiarities of governing a stateless city, the problems have proved especially vexing.

#### Barry's history

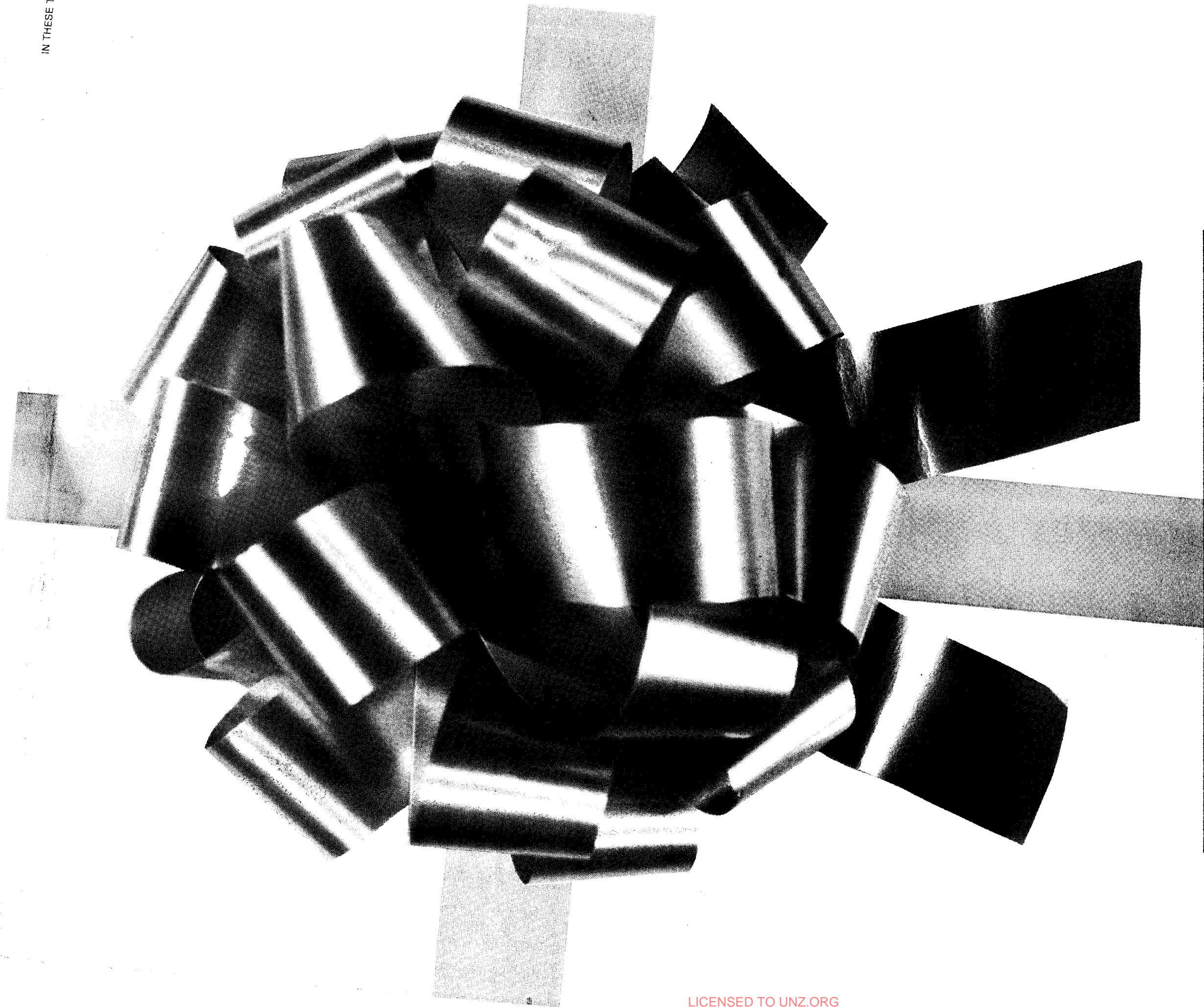
Barry jumped into politics straight from the civil rights movement. He was among the founders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and became its first executive director in 1960. Within months he gained a reputation for courage and creativity. It was Barry who conceived and organized the 1960 luncheonette sit-ins in Memphis. Sent to D.C. on an organizing mission in 1965, he became intrigued with the struggle to wrest control of the city from the federal government and deliver it into local (black) hands.

Claiming that the federal government's treatment of D.C. was "political slavery," Barry initiated a "Free D.C." campaign to focus the fight for home-rule. Then he left SNCC in 1967 to head a federally-funded program called Pride Inc., which employed thousands of D.C. youths. In 1971, after the home-rule movement won the right to hold school board elections, Barry was elected to the school board. The city was



Gloria Adams, a resident of Greenleaf Gardens for four years, said she had no complaints.





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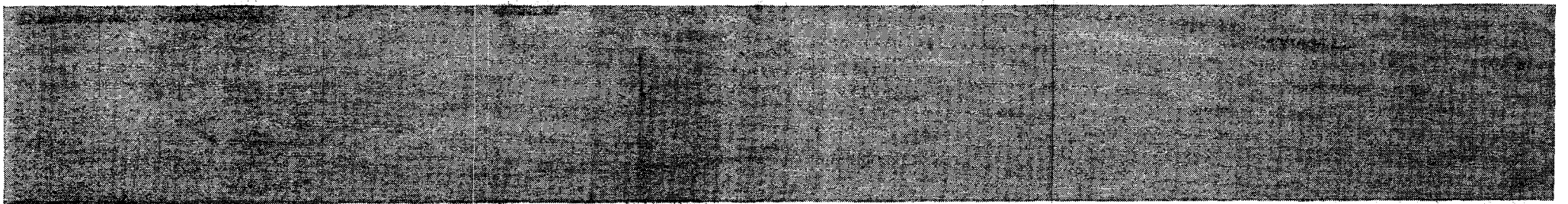
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# on or

## BLACK MAYORS

### Barry is too sticky on D.C.'s Marion Barry

granted the right to form a city council and elect a mayor in 1974. He ran and won an at-large council seat.

Barry ran for mayor in 1978 against incumbent Walter Washington and then City Council Chairman Sterling Tucker, both black members of the city's old-line elite. Washington, who had been commissioner under the old system and nominally elected in 1974, was seen by many blacks as too conciliatory for the more assertive political stance African-Americans were assuming; Tucker represented the black establishment. Barry won in an upset, polling more than half the white vote. After his election, he ran into opposition from the D.C. black establishment that proved as formidable as what he faced from white power brokers.

Initially the city's entrenched black elite rejected Barry. His political style differed drastically from the gentle, low-key image so assiduously cultivated by D.C.'s black gentry. By 1982, however, Barry had gained the support of the city's black majority, and that election he handily defeated Patricia Roberts Harris, his black female opponent who was a former member of President Jimmy Carter's cabinet. Barry is often criticized for the "blacker-than-thou" tactics he used in his race against Harris.

But Harris employed equally questionable tactics. In one campaign speech she ridiculed Barry for lacking the articulation to pronounce Afghanistan, and frequently

referred to his lack of verbal facility and excessive use of slang. Harris, another product of the black Washington elite, continued to exploit the city's class prejudices in attempts to defeat this brash upstart who seemingly had come out of nowhere to the top of the city's political heap.

"There's very little interaction between the black middle class and the black underclass in this city," Tate says. "For a while the mayor was trying to forge links between the two groups, but lately he seems to have forgotten about that problem."

Many among D.C.'s black population agree with Tate's assessment of class segregation. Vernard Gray, owner of a black-oriented art gallery in the city's Anacostia section, complained that blacks in the District are "squandering our true legacy" because of counterproductive class antagonisms.

Some critics charge that Barry gains from fomenting those class divisions. "The mayor is a true Machiavellian," says Ewart Thomas, a federal bureaucrat and a D.C. native. "He keeps everyone at each other's throat and then casts himself as the soother. He gives everyone just a little less than they need. This keeps them both beholden and dependent."

Despite the criticisms, both friends and foes alike agree that Barry's reign has benefited the city in specific ways. Downtown development is soaring, the Metro rail system is an urban showpiece—although problems remain in the incomplete system—unemployment is down significantly, the District boasts a summer youth program that is a model for the nation, the city management has been thoroughly professionalized and D.C. is more financially secure than ever.

Some white residents of the District have applauded Barry's attempt to modernize the city's bureaucracy, and his pro-development policies have won over those downtown interests who initially feared he would present an obstacle to their plans for economic expansion. But west of Rock Creek Park, where most of the city's whites live, Barry is widely disliked. In a recent poll, more than 60 percent of the whites surveyed thought his administration had been too scarred by scandal to retain power.

#### Scandal city

Barry's first scandal broke just months after he won his first election, when it was revealed that he had accepted a low-rate mortgage from a banker who sought development rights to city-owned land. And near the end of his first term, an investigation disclosed that his first wife had diverted funds from Pride Inc. into her private bank account. She was later convicted and sentenced to three years in federal prison.

The pace of scandals accelerated during Barry's second term. Among the many charges that swirled around his administration are accusations the mayor used and procured illicit drugs; the city paid an inflated price for property it purchased from a Barry crony; the city's set-aside minority business program was used to line the pockets of the mayor's friends; the mayor blatantly patronized a house of ill-repute; and the list goes on.

An article in the *Washington Monthly* this



Rick Reinhard

summer presented a particularly scathing account of Barry's tenure. Written by Juan Williams, a *Washington Post* writer who has followed the Barry administration at close range for many years, the piece was merciless in its appraisal of the former SNCC leader's political adventures. "Marion Barry's administration has compiled a record of corruption as disheartening as any in recent years," Williams wrote. "Certainly a mayor bathed in a constant stream of scandal and leading an arrogant lifestyle amid so much despair should be kicked out by voters at the first opportunity."

Barry's supporters have insisted that since the mayor hasn't been charged in any of the scandals, he should remain free of their taint. Further, they have argued that U.S. Attorney Joseph DiGenova, the Republican appointee from whose office several of the scandals originated, is using the Barry administration as a stairway to a national reputation.

But even some of the mayor's supporters concede that he often displays a troubling lack of discretion. "In some ways, I'd have to say the mayor is a bit like Reagan—he has a teflon coating," says a high-ranking official in Barry's administration.

The scandal considered the most damaging to Barry was the one involving Ivanhoe Donaldson, the brilliant organizer who was convicted of embezzling at least \$200,000 from the city to fuel his extravagant lifestyle (see *In These Times*, Feb. 5). Donaldson was known and admired throughout the civil rights community as a man of firm idealism and unimpeachable integrity. While others preferred applause, Donaldson had always been content to work behind the scenes and his name became almost synonymous with rectitude. He later became the mayor's nuts-and-bolts operator and was widely acknowledged to be the prime mover of the Barry administration. Donaldson's downfall reportedly took a heavy emotional toll on Barry, but, again, he remained relatively untouched by the criminal improprieties of his principle deputy and close friend.

Washington, D.C., is one of this nation's most paradoxical cities. While containing the best educated black community of any met-

ropolitan area in the U.S., it has also one of the largest proportions of blacks in the so-called underclass. With an estimated median income of \$24,400 in 1985, black households here earn considerably more money than they do in most cities. Yet fully one-third of all black children in D.C. are being raised in poverty-stricken homes, and more than one-half of the District's black children live in female-headed households. The problems of infant mortality, youth homicide, teenage pregnancy, illiteracy, drug abuse and crime are as bad or worse than they are in other urban communities.

The city is peopled with one of the most cosmopolitan populations in the Western world, but it still has the feel of a conformity-conscious Southern town with provincial sensibilities. For example, it is almost impossible for a young black man to hail a cab in downtown D.C. And blacks are often made to feel unwelcome at bars and clubs in D.C.'s expanding gentrified areas.

"Many white bar owners would rather keep their establishment from 'going black,' so they take steps—often subtle and often illegal—to keep the ratio of blacks to whites at an 'acceptable' level," read an article in the October issue of *The Washingtonian*. "Noting that a great many young blacks wear sneakers, one bar owner in Georgetown simply instituted a 'no sneaker' dress code." Although "go-go" music, born in D.C.'s ghettos, has an enthusiastic international following, whites in the city seldom venture into the music's main venues.

It is this D.C. paradox that one observer uses to explain Barry's improbable longevity. "Marion Barry survives because he's a Southern boy who's just having a good time in a town full of serious people," says Clarence Hunter, editor of the black-owned newspaper, the *Washington Afro-American*. "He's an interloper who has become the consummate insider; the bumpkin who's become the smooth, teflon-coated sophisticate, the capitalist-bashing radical who's become the venture capitalists' best ally."

Paradoxically, Hunter notes, it's Barry's lack of guile and discretion that's made him impervious to scandal.



Rick Reinhard



## LETTERS

## 4½ months

**W**HEN THE DUST SETTLES AND THE smoke clears—and we go back to discussing more important things—the following facts will emerge from my recent firing as editor of *Mother Jones* magazine (see *In These Times*, Sept. 24, Oct. 8, 15 and 29).

In addition to the question of Nicaragua and the firing of Richard Schauffler, which have been covered in Joan Walsh's article and recent letters, this is what happened. In the past 12 months, 23 *Mother Jones* employees—including the entire circulation department, the entire advertising department, three editors, the associate publisher and the business manager—have left the magazine. When viewed in this context, any attempt by Adam Hochschild to portray my firing as a singular incident of "one guy who just didn't get along" can be seen as the smokescreen it is. *Mother Jones* was an intolerable place to work for many of those recently-departed 23, the vast majority of whom were women.

In my four-and-a-half-month tenure, the unionized staff filed four grievances against the publisher, including one complaint with the National Labor Relations Board. (Since my departure there has been another NLRB complaint.) The union reps threatened a wildcat strike to protest the contract violations committed by publisher Don Hazen and, eventually, several people quit.

I followed the contract and supported the employees in their right to union representation. This "siding with the union" made Hazen angry and he repeatedly informed Hochschild of my "leanings." When Adam Hochschild fired me, he said I had "disrupted" the management team and that I had to go.

Before my arrival, *Mother Jones* had lost more than 80,000 subscribers in the past four years. As a result, the editor, Deirdre English, agreed to step down and was given a \$20,000 "golden parachute" by Hochschild—at the same time he laid off the entire staff for a month because of "a lack of funds." English told me, two hours after I was hired, that she "resented" my presence, was "insulted" by me and that the only reason I was hired was because Adam was "tired of looking" and had to go on a ski trip. She added, quite prophetically, that "you won't last here.... When Adam's rested he'll begin his search for who he really wants as editor."

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On my first day at work, managing editor Bruce Dancis came into my office and announced that Hochschild had approved everyone's annual vacations and that he and the other editors would be leaving "beginning next week," and that the full editorial staff would not return until two months later. Welcome to *Mother Jones*!

Dancis did leave behind a stack of assignments of stories—the kind of journalism that I felt had led to *Mother Jones*' decline. The stories included "an inside look at herbal teas," an explanation of the ways "socially responsible" yuppies can invest all that disposable income and—here's a unique plot line—a report on how the children of '60s generation parents are growing up to be little Republicans.

Nevertheless, I was able to produce two issues of *Mother Jones* during my tenure. Those two ("Revenge of the Rivethead" in September and "Captain Midnight" in October) resulted in more publicity for the magazine than it had received in a long time. (Stories in *Newsweek*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, the *Today* show, UPI and dozens of local radio and TV interviews.) Those two issues are the only barometer of my editorial leadership. Readers can make their own judgments about the direction I was giving *Mother Jones*. As I stated in my second column in the magazine: "...Let the polluters, the Pentagon brass and the corporate presidents be put on notice: *Mother Jones* plans to fight—and fight hard—to stop you from doing any more damage. We will be unrelenting in our coverage, not just of your individual wrongdoing, but of the very system that perpetuates your existence. Replacing a Richard Allen with a Robert McFarlane or a defective car with a new, improved version will no longer satisfy us."

Stories I had planned that will not now appear included an inside look at Southern Air Transport (assigned before Hasenfus' plane was shot down), a special issue on the plight of the Palestinians, an expose of an ex-Nazi who now occupies a high position in this country and who makes Waldheim look like a

Boy Scout; a monthly piece by Alexander Cockburn; a story on how Eisenhower tried to develop his own Star Wars program; and a monthly column by an autoworker about life on the assembly line.

These are some facts regarding my firing that have not appeared in the press.

As for my future plans, I'll be writing some of the articles I intended for *Mother Jones* for other magazines. I may syndicate a column, or I may revive the *Michigan Voice*, which I founded and edited for 10 years. Most likely, a group of us will launch a small but feisty muck-raking weekly in early 1987 with a heavy emphasis on the stories not covered by the other media—sort of an '80s version of *I.F. Stone's Weekly*. Until then, I can be reached at either 327 Parnassus, San Francisco 94117 or the unemployment line on Mission Street, just seven blocks up from *Mother Jones*.

Michael Moore  
San Francisco

## Real questions

**T**HANK YOU FOR PEGGY SEEGER'S EXCELLENT article, "Grenada: \$80 million and one trial later" (*ITT*, Oct. 8).

It is good finally to have an article that asks the real questions about Grenada, October 1983. What was the U.S. government's role in the events of Oct. 19, 1983, that led to Maurice Bishop's death? The North American left must be concerned about this and demand an answer from our government.

Nancy Worcester  
Madison, Wis.

## Clap or cancer?

**F**OR THOSE OF US WHO HAVE HAD THE UNfortunate experience to encounter the Democratic Workers' Party (DWP), it is quite understandable how a left publication (in this case *Mother Jones*) could overreact when it became aware of a DWP member in its midst. Let's set the record

straight. The DWP was a divisive, ultra-left sect that had a long and sordid record of causing havoc and disruption, often through public denunciations of progressive individuals and publications (like *Mother Jones*) as "petty-bourgeois."

Contrary to what Richard Schauffler claims in his letter (*ITT*, Oct. 15), Joan Walsh's comparison of the DWP to a venereal disease is not an example of hysteria on her part. Walsh could have more aptly described the DWP as a malignant cancer that required swift eradication.

While blacklisting Schauffler was incorrect, we should not allow him and others like him off the hook. Wreckers and splitters must be held accountable for their reprehensible actions that have caused so much damage on the left over the last 10 years. One would hope there might be enough political integrity among individual leftists, like Schauffler, to make some public renouncements of their past. Without such a statement, there is no reason to believe that sectarians can contribute to the growth of a viable left.

Charlie Kaften  
Berkeley, Calif.

## Sorry!

**T**HE HEADLINE "EX-NFL UNION BOSS blitzes for Senate" on David Moberg's article on Ed Garvey's Wisconsin campaign (*ITT*, Oct. 22) is inexcusable. While the mainstream media relies on such clichés to promote this stereotypical view of labor leaders, *ITT*'s readers should be able to expect more objective reportage. Even in "The Independent Socialist Newspaper," one never sees corporate executives referred to as "company bosses."

While this may seem unimportant to you (the article itself was sympathetic to labor unions' participation in the political process), such a headline only reinforces unfortunate generalizations about unions and their officers.

Mark M. Brooks  
Nashville, Tenn.

**Editor's note:** Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

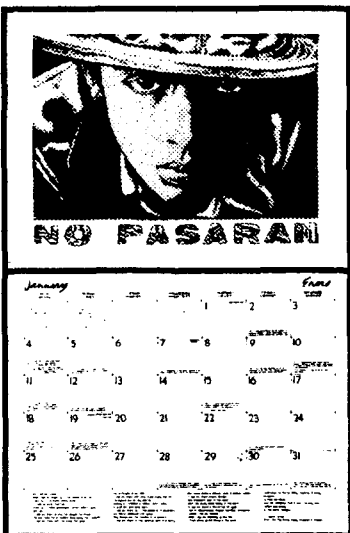
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## PERSPECTIVE

By Martin Oppenheimer

Europe still under  
a Chernobyl cloud

**F**IVE MONTHS AFTER THE Chernobyl reactor fire, a news blackout on its effects outside the Soviet bloc continues. On September 23 the *New York Times* finally ran a front-page story based on a Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory study saying the disaster may have emitted more radioactive cesium than "the total of hundreds of atmospheric tests and the two nuclear bombs dropped on Japan at the end of World War II." An earlier piece (September 14) had discussed the fallout's effects on Laplanders in Sweden. But prior to that, mentions of radioactivity in Western Europe had been relegated to the newspaper's back pages.

Aside from these brief items—which served as almost parenthetical asides to the main Chernobyl story—and one on potential cancer deaths—no in-depth coverage of Chernobyl's effects on countries closer to the U.S. than Poland had appeared. Yet by that time, Sweden had announced a speed-up of its 1980 decision to close all its reactors by the year 2020, and the prime minister had been quoted as saying, "Nuclear power must be gotten rid of." In West Germany the Social Democratic Party (SPD) had repudiated its support for nuclear energy and had voted to close the nation's nuclear plants within 10 years if the party was returned to office.

The story was there, plain to see if you opened your eyes. When I arrived in West Berlin on June 26, I was asked to park my shoes outside the door of my host's apartment. He had no fresh milk, fruit, vegetables or meat in his refrigerator. The local newspaper, *Tagesspiegel*, was running almost daily radiation counts on a range of produce—both German and imported—that read like commodities futures. Milk and local fresh-water lake fish remained at unacceptable radiation levels. Berlin grocery stores posted notices guaranteeing their produce at radiation levels below government-set limits.

In Frankfurt, parents got city officials to dump sand out of sandboxes in public playgrounds. In Wiesbaden, all public playgrounds, parks and sports arenas were closed. Three West German states plowed under their lettuce, spinach and broccoli crops (with reparations to be paid to farmers) and cattle were forbidden to graze in some areas. Austria banned the sale of all leafy vegetables on May 5 and, along with other European Economic Community nations, barred all produce imports from most Eastern bloc countries. The Swiss recommended that infants and pregnant women not drink fresh milk, which was reading at radiation levels six times normal.

In East Germany *Neues Deutschland*, official organ of the Central Committee of the (East German) Socialist Unity (Communist) Party, assured readers that radiation levels had been stabilized at a low level and that there never had been any danger. The paper approvingly quoted U.S. and West German experts, as well as Polish colleagues, to the same effect. They did not report that Poland issued a nonradioactive iodine compound to counteract iodine 131 radiation to all children under age 17 at about that time. They also failed to mention that although the West German government continued to downplay Chernobyl's effects, governments at the state level did not share this optimistic view. Nor did West Berlin, which, like some other states, set radiation limits for foodstuffs, particularly milk, far stricter than the federal government's.

What the East Berlin regime did say, however, was revealing enough. On the evening of April 30, four days after Chernobyl exploded, atmospheric radiation levels resulting from the movement of the

initial "cloud" were measured at 460 becquerels per cubic meter; normal readings from background atmospheric radiation are between one and 10 becquerels. By 2:00 p.m. on May 2 the reading was down to 96, a figure consistent with readings in Bavaria (May 1: 110) and in the Friesian Islands on the North Sea.

The East Germans published, without criticism, West Germany's assertion that average radiation doses in late April and early May were only about 3.7 millirem for adults, compared to a normal annual dose of "between 150 and 400" millirem from background radiation. "A person can absorb a dose of about 210 millirem over natural radiation without danger to health," they said.

These views came under extensive attack in mid-May. A group of West Berlin doctors issued an information sheet in the format of questions and answers. First, the normal annual background radiation for a German is around 125 millirem, not 150-400. (In the U.S.: around 100 plus 5 from global fallout, plus medical X-rays that average around 73.) West German law permits workers at nuclear plants an additional 30. Therefore, the doctors pointed out, if Chernobyl added an average of 100 millirem for the year, the average German adult was absorbing three times the legally established level of radiation.

But average doses are quite misleading, since atmospheric and ground-level radiation varies considerably from area to area even within a large metropolis depending on wind, rainfall and soil composition. Furthermore, with sufficient notice and good planning, doses can be significantly reduced—something that, with alarmingly few exceptions, did not take place in Western Europe.

According to an article by Christoph Hohenemser and colleagues at Konstanz, Germany, in the June *Environment*, "During the passage of the cloud, peak air radionuclide concentrations reached 100,000 times background levels in Poland, and as high as 10,000 times background in Scotland." It is highly improbable that Berlin readings were less than 10,000 times normal for some kinds of radioactivity from April 30 to May 2.

How serious was all this? How serious does it continue to be? The answers are more political than scientific. Clearly there are vested interests involved: the tourism industry in West Germany, Yugoslavia, Greece and other countries all went to great lengths to minimize the radiation hazards. Heinz Hahn of the West German Study Group for Tourism was quoted in the July 13 *New York Times* as deploring the "panic," and blamed it all on the media. Since the media had not covered Chernobyl's effects except to engage in considerable Soviet-bashing, he probably had the statistically-thin threat of terrorism in mind. Yet at the very moment when Yugoslavia and Greece were issuing reassuring reports to the rest of the world, their national radio broadcasts were warning the population to keep children out of sandboxes and away from fresh milk. As a result consumers began runs on stores to purchase powdered milk and canned goods while fresh vegetables at farmers' markets rotted.

More important than tourism is the nuclear industry (including state-operated nuclear energy plants). Thomas B. Cochran, of the Natural Resources Defense Council, was quoted in the *New York Times* (August 29) as saying, "The radiation experts using the low [casualty] fig-

ures get their livelihoods from the nuclear industry and are trying to salvage their programs by minimizing the consequences." Cochran is co-author, with Princeton University's Frank von Hippel, of an article on the long-term health consequences of Chernobyl in the August/September issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

The evaluation of long-term radiation effects is risky. The authors of the *Environment* article put it dramatically: "Millions throughout Europe will never be free of

The American  
press has all but  
ignored radiation  
aftermath in West.

the fear that the cloud may have bequeathed their families a legacy of cancer or birth defects." Chernobyl released the largest quantity of radioactive material ever freed in one accident, exceeding the peak of atmospheric nuclear weapons testing in the early '60s. Von Hippel and Cochran estimate that in the absence of public health measures, there might have been 400,000 thyroid tumors, but only a

small percent would have been fatal. They further estimate up to 70,000 cancer cases (about half of them fatal) from Cesium 137, which has a half-life of 30 years, and which comes to rest in a variety of meats and produce. Cattle feed from grass cut in May and June is now stored in silos and barns. This feed is contaminated, and so are the storage areas, exposing farm workers and their children to further risk. Next winter's powdered milk, next spring's beer, next year's vodka, will all contain abnormal levels of radioactivity.

Yet the *Environment* authors also say that nothing about nuclear energy will affect cancer statistics nearly as much as smoking, food habits, background radiation and medical X-rays. "The delayed effects will be undetectable against the background of cancers from other causes." The average chance (remembering that averages are misleading) is one in 100,000 at a distance of 1,000 kilometers downwind from Chernobyl. So it is not surprising, in the context of vested interests, to find editorials such as the one on May 5 in the *Allegemeine*, reassuring readers that this year's dose is "so minimal that it can be said with certainty that no illness from radiation will take place." Of course, damage to the genes is possible, but then, "natural radiation has always existed, yet mankind has survived despite it."

The big question remains. Given what we now know, can we accept the risks of further Chernobyls, one of which might occur under more adverse conditions, and in an area where populations are more vulnerable? ■

*Martin Oppenheimer's most recent book is White Collar Politics, published by the Monthly Review Press.*

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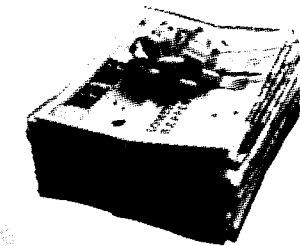
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## INTERVIEW



Nicaragua's Defense Minister Humberto Ortega with his brother Daniel and Fidel Castro

## Nicaragua minister of defense on the U.S. war

By William I. Robinson  
and Kent Norsworthy

MANAGUA

Nicaraguan Defense Minister Humberto Ortega Saavedra rarely gives interviews. Perhaps the most reticent of the Sandinista leaders, the commander-in-chief of the Sandinista Peoples Army is also one of the most important. The brother of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, Humberto is known as a brilliant military strategist. He directed the 1979 national insurrection that overthrew the Somoza dictatorship, and has played a key role in drawing up Sandinista defense strategy against the contras.

Journalists William I. Robinson and Kent Norsworthy spoke for three hours with Ortega last May in an exclusive interview for their forthcoming book, *David and Goliath: The U.S. War Against Nicaragua* (Monthly Review Press). The interview took place before Congress approved Reagan's \$100 million contra aid request. The interview provides important background and context for the conflict, as well as reflections on Sandinista views.

**Robinson and Norsworthy: What do you see as the principal obstacle to resolving the current conflict between Nicaragua and the U.S.?**

**Humberto Ortega:** The United States has been closely tied up with Nicaragua's historic development since last century. Relations between the two countries have been unjust and unequal, characterized by the domination and exploitation of the big over the small. Nicaragua is an underdeveloped, very poor and dependent country precisely because of these relations.

Those who formulate Ronald Reagan's policy toward Nicaragua seek to maintain these past relations; this is the impediment you are asking about. We feel that if the United States would understand that this type of relationship is wrong and must not continue, the war could be put aside and we might be able to live with one another—to coexist. We Sandinistas believe that the U.S. and Nicaragua can and must coexist within the framework of international relations in the world today. We seek coexistence between our countries, between

different systems, between Sandinista thought and the system of thought, politics and culture that makes up the U.S. nation (which, I might add, we are not trying to change—that is something for the North American people to do).

Currently, however, the Reagan administration does not want to see such coexistence materialize. We consider current U.S. policy to be state terrorism, something that will only further deteriorate the dangerous situation in Central America and aggravate the problems in Latin America as a whole....

**Can you speak on the development of the war?**

The current U.S. administration came to the conclusion that the Revolution had to be destroyed because it threatens their interests (which are not the same as the interests of the American people). They then proceeded to design a comprehensive plan to accomplish this goal. By 1985, after four years of aggression, this plan had fully materialized.

The spearhead of this plan is military aggression, complemented by diplomatic warfare aimed at isolating Nicaragua internationally (especially in Latin America) and by internal ideological-political aggression aimed at separating the Revolution from its popular base. The U.S. has also employed economic, financial and commercial aggression to boycott Nicaragua, not only with regard to the United States, but also in Western Europe and Latin America. All this indicates to us that the original plan was neither a simple, nor a short-term one. Rather, it was the blueprint for a total war; a war meant to destroy the very possibility of revolutionary change in Nicaragua.

The character of this "total war" is eminently interventionist. There is no civil war in Nicaragua. What there is is a war of intervention that employs mercenary forces. The contras are completely dependent on U.S. backing and on the leasing of Honduran and Costa Rican territory. If the U.S. were to cut its material and logistical support to these forces, the war would be over in a matter of weeks.

The U.S. was aware from the beginning that the mercenary forces would ultimately be little more than a stepping stone, that they alone could not achieve

the destruction of the Revolution. The contras are being used to create conditions that permit direct intervention of U.S. military forces. Nevertheless, they did attempt to have the mercenary forces by themselves destroy the Revolution—this was seen as the cheapest way to victory. They also tried to have the contras win a social base inside the country, believing that the stronger the mercenary army became, the less direct commitment the U.S. would have to make.

In the first phase of the war (1981-83), we were weak, with little experience in building an army. We had no special units, we did not have the number of officers we have today, nor did we have the arms or the massive organization at the grassroots level. They tried to resolve the situation with a short-term approach, to remove us from power quickly.

But what happened? While it is true that we were weak militarily, we were very strong politically. The contras didn't have political strength to complement their military effort. We were strong because of the massive organization of the people to defend the Revolution. We also began to construct a modern army, and by 1983, we were capable of arming between 70,000 and 80,000 men. So, when they launched their large-scale offensives that year, we defeated them and they failed to achieve their objectives.

By the 1984-85 period, the U.S. had changed its tactics to those of irregular warfare: fighting along the borders, in jungle regions, avoiding direct confrontation with other forces. They needed guerrilla warfare to advance their plans for intervention. We created irregular warfare battalions and other defense structures, acquired more advanced communications systems and weaponry, developed more advanced training, gained valuable combat experience and carried out massive popular defense mobilizations. The implementation of the Patriotic Military Service [SMP]—mandatory draft for males between 18-25—was also a strategic advance that allowed us to stabilize the defense system.

Although the contras managed to increase their presence inside the country during this period, they failed to create a civil war and to empower a larger army. The contras have entered a process we call "strategic defeat." This does not mean that we have eliminated them altogether, but rather that they have experienced ongoing defeats, and the possibility of their becoming a force strong enough to spearhead a U.S. intervention is smaller every day.

By 1986, the mercenary forces had been

forced to disperse. There are still contras scattered in different parts of the country, but they are in a defensive and passive situation. It has become increasingly difficult for them to penetrate the borders, and when they do, they tend to disperse quickly and look for a way out. Those who leave the fighting are reluctant to return.

**In Nicaragua, defense is not limited to the military sphere, since the U.S. war is being waged on all fronts....**

Parallel to the development of our military apparatus, we have moved forward in waging an integral war of defense. Starting in late 1983, we began to create the necessary legal and political conditions, and to organize ourselves for a comprehensive defense strategy to confront the enemy's total war.

We defend ourselves on the diplomatic front in the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, etc. We have tried to strengthen our friendships, and to persuade all international political forces, including those within the U.S. itself, to oppose Washington's policy of isolating Nicaragua. Diplomacy is our first line of defense, and we attach a lot of importance to it.

We have also strengthened our defense on the internal political front, chiefly through the policy of national unity. The government feels that internally, over and above the ideological differences and distinct classes that make up Nicaraguan society, a spirit of national unity must prevail in the face of the military, economic, political and diplomatic aggressions.

In the social and economic arenas, we have designed comprehensive programs, especially in the zones most affected by the war. These programs have been directed above all towards poor, isolated *campesinos* in areas where the revolution had not arrived since 1979, or where perhaps we had committed errors. In these areas, at one time, the contras managed to gain limited social support.

The government prioritized the countryside by bringing in basic goods for rural consumption, and also through progress in agrarian reform, which has allowed us to satisfy the land needs of a great many *campesinos*. Without question, these and other concrete steps undermined support that the contras had gained among certain *campesinos*. They also allowed us to militarily strike more swiftly and efficiently, pushing the contras back to the border.

**What effects has the "strategic defeat" had on the contras?**

The profound demoralization of their forces has had repercussions on the political, organizational and diplomatic activities they have tried to carry out. Logically, as the contras' military element is weakened, their political and ideological facade is weakened. This is what is now happening. The strategic defeat has ushered in a process of generalized decomposition. The contras are spiralling into great corruption, infighting and mistrust amongst themselves.

**What options are left for the Reagan administration?**

The United States will try to preserve the remaining contra forces, to have them permanently carrying out sabotage and terrorism, murdering civilians, professionals, technicians. They'll try to combine this with internal destabilization actions from the right wing, the financial and economic boycott. They'll try to bring about the economic collapse of the country, and with it the collapse of the hopes of the Nicaraguan people who—disconcerted by the economic crisis—will rise up against the Sandinistas. At that moment, the U.S. can intervene directly. These are their plans.

But they are blind to the fact that to the degree that the aggression deepens, the revolution will also deepen and the people

*Continued on following page*



# Another guise of the right wing's counter-establishment

### The Rise of the Counter-Establishment

By Sidney Blumenthal  
Times Books, 369 pp. \$19.95

By Paul Gottfried

**S**IDNEY BLUMENTHAL, A prominent left-wing journalist, has written a lively and insightful study of the renaissance of the American right. Blumenthal argues that the rise of the right has depended upon and been sustained by the creation of an ideological counter-establishment, based in think-tanks, foundations and publications.

Blumenthal has been attacked in conservative and neoconservative publications for dismissing without apparent argument eminent theorists like Russell Kirk (whom he describes as "neo-feudal") and for taking pot-shots at neoconservative publicists like *Commentary* editor Norman Podhoretz. Much of this criticism is merited.

Blumenthal is overly fond of telling seemingly apocryphal stories about people he plainly dislikes. For instance, he tells how Podhoretz loudly abused two distinguished professors, Lionel Trilling and Sidney Hook, while they were dining at the Columbia University Faculty Club. Since Podhoretz is not known to raise his voice and, from all appearances, treated both Trilling and Hook reverentially, Blumenthal should have either revealed the source of such an implausible story or not used it.

This scuttlebutt diverts attention from Blumenthal's serious insights. He argues persuasively that economic policy has been basic to the rise of the conservative counter-establishment. The crucial swing that occurred on the American right from the monetarism of Milton Friedman to the supply-side economics of Jude Wanniski and Rep. Jack Kemp helped change the image of conservatives from dour budget-balancers to happy tax cut-

ters and allowed them to assume national political leadership. Blumenthal also understands the contradictions that stir beneath the surface: how self-described conservatives like Irving Kristol appeal to entrepreneurial values while living comfortably with corporate capitalism and the welfare state.

### Neo-con left-wing roots

The most provocative part of Blumenthal's book—and the one that has drawn the most fire from *Commentary*, *The American Spectator* and *National Review*—is his discussion of neoconservatism. By focusing attention on a few scurrilous anecdotes, Blumenthal's foes have ignored what is most important about his discussion. Blumenthal shows that the neoconservatives' conservatism remains rooted in their left-wing past.

Blumenthal distinguishes the "shadow leftism" of Norman Podhoretz, Irving Kristol and other members of the *Commentary-Public Interest* circle from the "shadow liberalism" of the older American right. The older right, typified by Herbert Hoover, combined a vision of an idealized past with the progressive outlook of a middle-class, capitalist society. By contrast, the neoconservatives have drawn upon a radical, often Trotskyist, past that continues to shape their politics.

Unfortunately, Blumenthal, in the course of berating conservatism, sometimes blurs the distinction between the "shadow leftists" and the "shadow liberals" by lumping together indiscriminately old-style Taft Republicans, libertarians and neoconservatives. This angry gesture gets in the way of a coherent treatment of the neoconservatives as a group distinct from the older American right. And it obscures the degree to which they have come to dominate the older institutions of conservatism—making Blumenthal's conservative counter-establishment a "neoconservative counter-establishment."

Blumenthal tells us that the Marxist sectarian past of the older generation of neoconservatives has contributed to their passion for intrigue and political confrontation and to their skill at insinuating themselves in the corridors of power. He suggests, but does not sufficiently elaborate, another point: that the neoconservatives' sectarian past has shaped their political understanding.

Much of the neoconservative rhetoric is quintessentially leftist and at least vestigially Trotskyist. The calls for global democratic revolution that resound through the pages of *Commentary* have nothing to do with the founding vision of *National Review* or Kirk's *Conservative Mind*. Indeed, James Burnham, *National Review*'s key foreign policy expert, thought that crusading democratic internationalists were bringing about a Western surrender to Marxist internationalism. Burnham saw an unmistakably left-wing "gestalt" in democratic internationalism even when combined with a strongly anti-Soviet foreign policy.

Moreover, the neoconservatives' defense of "democratic capitalism" cannot be equated with the conservatives' opposition to the welfare state. On the contrary, all

neoconservatives defend the New Deal and much of the Great Society. Their expressed admiration for George Orwell and their dislike of much of the old right indicates how they perceive themselves. They are fiercely anti-Soviet social democrats who see themselves as positioned in the virtuous middle of the political spectrum. On one side is the authoritarian, heartless right and on the other the Soviets and their American lackeys.

### "A vital center"

This neoconservative self-image, which is found in Podhoretz' *Breaking Ranks* and in a revealing article in this October's *Commentary* by Brigitte Berger, is far more than a form of self-flattery. Neoconservatives oppose the right and the left in the name of their "via media," "democratic capitalism." Like the Trotskyists, they always claim to occupy the vital center, between reactionaries and Soviet derailers of history.

The key to their present success was the willingness of old right foundations to incorporate increasing numbers of Cold War liberals. Blumenthal, who persists in treating neoconservatives as merely the "ideological light brigade" of the counter-establishment, does not pay sufficient attention to the changing of the guard that brought neoconservatives into dominant, policy-making positions at the American Enterprise Institute, the Scaife and Olin foundations, and other key counter-establishment institutions.

The directors and presidents of these institutions managed to convince their trustees that right-wing think-tanks would remain intellectually marginalized, unless they could attract mainstream academics and journalists. In his book, *The Neoconservatives*, Peter Steinfels showed the powerful impression that Kristol's *The Public Interest* (and the glittering constella-

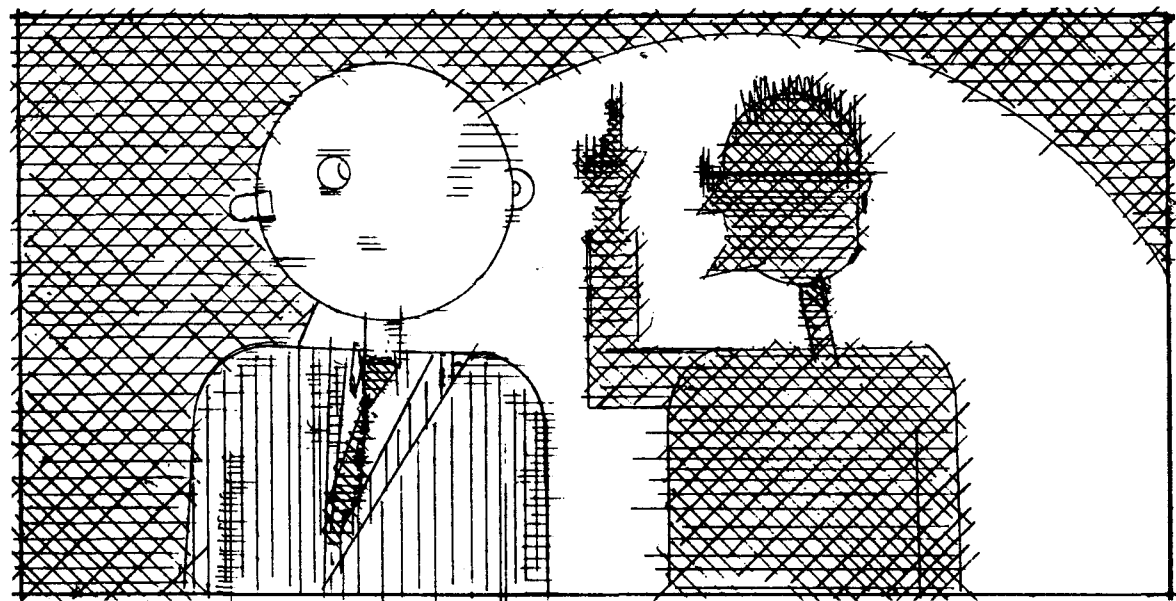
tion of former left-wing sociologists who wrote for it) has made upon conservative foundations. Conservatives thought that these politically disaligned celebrities were their main chance for intellectual respectability.

The review of Blumenthal's book by Jeffrey Hart in *National Review* puts into relief the completeness of the neoconservative victory on the right. Hart, once a Catholic paleo-conservative, bashes Blumenthal for insulting the neoconservatives. He obligingly hastens to call *Commentary* "persistently brilliant" and objects to any further distinction between the conservatives and the neoconservatives. To their credit, I would note, the neoconservatives continue to make such a distinction. They have taken over the funds and the institutions of the old right without flattering those they have swallowed up.

Significantly, few if any of the neoconservatives have become traditional conservatives. They remain "shadow leftists" who promote themselves by providing the foundations and the Reagan administration with usable policies and slogans. Their changing ideology has been a series of maneuvers intended to uphold the political status quo.

As Blumenthal notes, the neoconservatives face an uncertain future. Their influence stems neither from a real political base nor from any grassroots movement. Only luck and ingenuity account for their present political and financial success—and neither will likely last. And insofar as they now hold sway over the conservative counter-establishment, it, too, faces an uncertain future. Far more than his critics, Blumenthal makes us aware of how truly fragile this counter-establishment is.

Paul Gottfried is senior editor of *The World and I* and the author of *The Search for Historical Meaning* (Northern Illinois Press, 1986).



Continued from page 12

will become more and more conscious. What about a long-term, low intensity war?

This will be difficult for the U.S. because, although they can make Nicaragua suffer a lot, really impoverish us, they will not be able to provide solutions to the economic and social crises of the other Central American countries. They are going to create a total disaster in Central America, and revolutionary processes will accelerate.

The only real choice for the U.S. is to accept revolutionary change in Nicaragua and to seek an overall political solution in Central America. The U.S. can't maintain this type of policy over a long period. The moment will arrive in which these problems have to be resolved, and we hope the U.S. will choose coexistence.

The Sandinista revolution has stood out for its policies of political pluralism and mixed economy. In this context, the FSLN has pursued a policy of cross-class

national unity. Has there been a redefinition of national unity?

Following the triumph, there was a particular alliance, a general unity of anti-Somocista enthusiasm, which included the Robelos, the Arturo Cruzes, the Eden Pastoras and everyone. As the revolutionary process advanced more firmly toward non-alignment, anti-imperialism, and in favor of the most impoverished social classes in our society, there were some who didn't want to see this type of change and they defected from the revolution. Political alliances tend to redefine themselves, acquiring new contexts.

Here, we accept the existence of the bourgeoisie, but they must be patriotic and understand that, although they can continue to be rich, they must also serve the interests of the people and the nation. Those who have joined the counterrevolution wanted a regime in which the people adjust to the needs of the bourgeoisie, but here it is the other way around. Our framework is a mixed economy and polit-

ical pluralism in benefit of the people, and this demands greater individual sacrifice. The businessman who stays in the country, even though he might not participate in the revolution or support the Sandinistas, is a more conscientious and patriotic businessman than his counterpart of the past, and this strengthens a new kind of national unity.

On the other hand, the U.S. aggression has affected the mixed economy and its political expression. The Reagan administration does not want us to have a mixed economy, since it would mean that the Sandinistas are showing Latin America that change is possible without becoming copies of other systems, from one side or the other. Even without the war, we would surely have many economic problems—as all of Latin America does—but our problems would be much less severe than those of the other Central American countries. We would be setting an example in economic organization, in production, in administration, in social programs. Rea-

gan doesn't want this.

Reagan could care less about the private sector here. To give you an example, cotton production in Nicaragua—which is almost all in private hands—is highly technified and dependent on foreign exchange and U.S. imports, both of which are very limited because of the war and the economic embargo. So what does it mean to affect cotton? It means to affect the private sector.

It's not "Communism" they want to kill here. What Reagan wants to kill is the mixed economy and its political expression: political pluralism—that is, to kill the example, for the rest of Latin America, that it is possible to have a revolution of national liberation in which leftist and bourgeois forces work together in a common anti-imperialist front. They're not really looking to solve an "East-West" problem. What they want is to prevent the liberation of Latin America.

William I. Robinson and Kent Norsworthy work for the Agencia Nueva Nicaragua.



# MEDIA B E A T

## They Call It Public TV

Out in San Mateo, Calif., you can tune in weekday mornings to a public TV station and get stock market tips, from the stockbroker's mouth. The deal is simple: the stockbrokers pay the producers of *Stock Market Today*, which pays public station KCSM for the time. (The station received \$300,000 in federal tax dollars this year from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.) The payment from the brokers amounts to just under 10 percent of the station's annual budget. Those who would argue this is a public service might want to note that at least one of the hawkers of good stock deals on public TV has been found guilty of fraud by the Securities and Exchange Commission. PBS execs look askance at the practice, but one official put it frankly to the *Los Angeles Times*: "There are marketplace forces at work." KCSM is battling for dollars and viewers in a market where another public TV station, San Francisco's KQED, holds down a big audience. Many in commercial broadcasting still look to public broadcasting as a special noncommercial preserve. Yet listen to multimillion dollar radio syndicator Norm Pattiz, who told *Rolling Stone*, when asked about shutout of black music on his syndication service: "Sure there are things I would like to have done, approaches that might have been creative and made some kind of statement. But maybe those things are better left to National Public Radio, because they don't live or die by the ratings book." Pattiz might be surprised to hear the solution a couple of legislators—Senators Ritter (R-PA) and Oxley (R-OH)—have found to the chronic funding problem of public broadcasting. They have proposed legislation that, among other things, permanently permits public radio and TV to carry advertising. That's something that doesn't delight commercial broadcasters, of course. The chairman of the National Association of Broadcasters' task force to save public broadcasting (from the threat of commercial competition on the same airspace) pointed out, "the more public stations get into the commercial arena, the more they...deliver themselves to the mercy of advertisers and their aims, which must affect their programming content."

## Which Is the Sitcom, Which the News?

Anyone who can't decide whether Mr. Hasenfus, on trial in Nicaragua for CIA entanglement with the contras, is a good guy or a bad guy could have checked in with *Miami Vice* in early October. That was when an episode featuring contras as the bad guys ran, with none other than G. Gordon Liddy, ex-Watergate burglar, playing the part of the leader of a U.S. group backing the contras. Even the notoriously conservative *New York Times* TV critic John J. O'Connor (also famous for being the husband of Sonia Landau, chairwoman of the board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting) found that *Miami Vice*'s portrayal of the contras as "a mangy looking bunch" might reflect public opinion.

## Toys Are Us

We've come a long way since squirt guns in commodity culture. Toy manufacturers are taking note of an 18 percent rise in toy gun sales in 1986, and planning new products in the wake of the best-seller: a water-gun imitation of an Uzi machine gun. (The Uzi seems to have captured the public consciousness; it was also the real star of the movie *Red Dawn*, and the water gun is in use in pseudo-war games offered as a version of adult camp activities in the Poconos resort area.) Now one company has invested \$10 million promoting a game called Lazer Tag, in which opponents shoot at each other with infrared-light guns and protect themselves with sensitized shields.

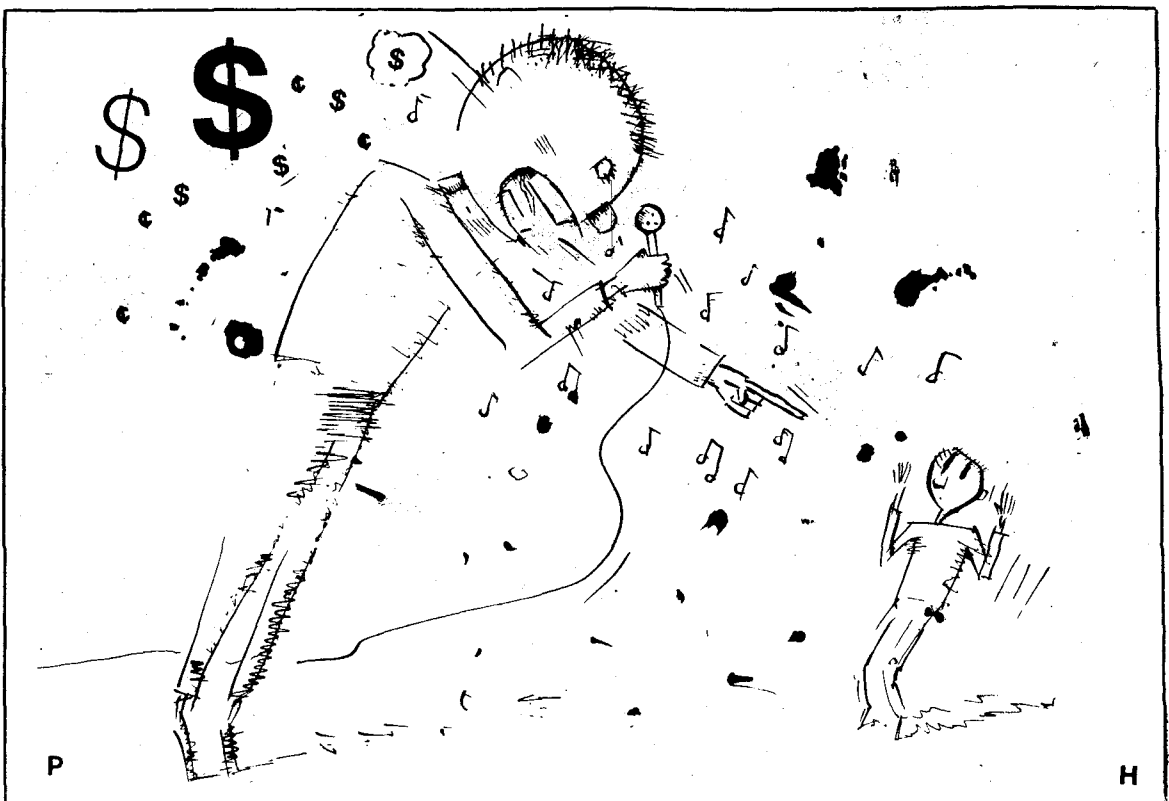
## South Africa, the Miniseries

Soon even the most headline-heedless of Americans will be able to recognize South African struggle. Heading for production at ABC is a miniseries dramatizing the last 40 years in South Africa, thanks to Harry Belafonte, who bought exclusive global rights to the Mandelas' life stories. Sidney Poitier is slated to star as Mandela and Jane Fonda as Molly Blackburn, the late leader of a white women's support organization. Also planned for an as-yet undecided role is Marlon Brando.

## No, Nothing Is Sacred

The Vietnam war as seen by recalcitrant privates used to be the view that never made the evening news. But Marvel Comics has just issued half a million copies of *The 'Nam*, starring private Ed Marks and looking, according to Marvel's editor-in-chief, "more like M\*A\*S\*H than *Rambo*." Mainstream comics are showing a trend toward antiheroes, with DC Comics' revamping in a darker mode of classic heroes like Superman and Batman. But *The 'Nam* takes a plunge off the edge of fantasy with promises in future issues of "fragging"—shooting of one's own officers—and appearances by Bob Hope and Jane Fonda. To those who get edgy at the idea of a grisly conflict as the subject of a comic book, the Marvel editor pointed out to the *Washington Post* that Marvel already distributes an authorized biography of Pope John Paul II. "We got letters saying, 'How dare you put the Pope in a comic book?' To which I replied, 'Hey, the guy wears a cape.'"

—Pat Aufderheide



## MUSIC

# Cracking the case of rock and roll's political opportunism

By Dave Marsh  
& Rock & Roll Confidential

**W**HATEVER HAPPENED to the concerns of Live Aid and "Sun City"? That was last year, baby. In 1985, it seemed pop music was getting the job done on many fronts, but now there's only one issue: crack. The records range from a comeback effort by Isaac Hayes ("Ike's Rap") to Doug E. Fresh's "Nuthin'." Stevie Wonder, James Brown and Run-DMC have put in personal appearances at anti-crack events. Hundreds of radio stations, prodded by Rick Dees of KIS-FM in Los Angeles, have jumped on the bandwagon. MTV will donate \$3 million worth of air time for a series of anti-drug, rock-star public service announcements being produced by Gold Mountain Records President Danny Goldberg.

While previous music industry efforts have focused on the causes of drug abuse (hunger, illiteracy, inequality, homelessness), now the clear thrust is to blame the victim for the crime under the general theme of "Just Say No." Bill Graham, who is co-promoting a projected Yankee Stadium anti-crack concert, says, "Awareness is the key."

Bill Cosby, at a press conference where he and Jesse Jackson urged mandatory drug testing, said, "For too long we've been blaming other people.... We've got to re-evaluate ourselves." The relentless wave of entertainers and athletes telling kids to get high on life may induce some crackheads to lay down the basepipe, but our crumbling cities will immediately bring forth other teenagers who will eagerly pick it up.

Some in the music industry are motivated by the desire to help just such kids. One person who lives in the Bronx tells of seeing a 10-year-old girl offer an old man a blow job for the price of her next hit of crack. This Bronx resident described his fear for his younger brothers and sisters and for his infant daughter. It's a disturbing, moving and all too typical story, which makes it even more appalling that the explosion of anti-

crack musical activity is wrenching the industry into line with the very political forces responsible for the conditions that create drug abuse.

## Anti-crack bandwagon

On October 7, Run-DMC spoke and performed at an anti-crack rally in New York attended by 4,000 schoolchildren. Mayor Ed Koch, whose pro-realtor policies have devastated much of the city, was the featured speaker and primary beneficiary of the attendant hoopla. New York Gov. Mario Cuomo has signed up Doug E. Fresh as an "ambassador to youth." California Attorney General John Van De Kamp provided a grant to help Danny Goldberg produce his "Rock Against Drugs" videos while the California Council on Criminal Justice, of which Van De Kamp is a member, has labeled heavy metal and punk bands as a "new gang phenomenon."

*Even the DEA says that "crack appears to be a secondary problem...."*

In part, the music industry's trading with the enemy is the result of the tremendous pressure to plug into anti-drug hysteria. It began with the PMRC's attacks last year, which President Reagan repeated in August of this year, citing "the inherent links of rock music to drugs."

It intensified when the House passed, 392-16, a bill that gives customs officers the authority to order any American citizen to assist in a drug arrest no matter how dangerous the situation. By a similar margin, the House followed Reagan's recommendation and voted to allow the use of illegally obtained evidence to be used in drug cases.

The record companies haven't

responded to any of this because they have other fish to fry. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) will be moving its headquarters from New York to Washington in early 1987 because "the commercial and creative health and growth potential of our member companies are increasingly linked to Washington objectives."

In other words, the RIAA will continue to quietly accept music censorship and the erosion of the Constitution in order to get its sacred home-taping tax bill passed. To speak out against Reagan's defamation of our music or against the growing attacks on civil liberties would only jeopardize the RIAA's "Washington objectives." But making a lot of noise about drug abuse won't.

This is the sort of song the RIAA's hoped-for political allies want to hear, but not because the drug problem is becoming worse. The American Medical Association says that teenage drug and alcohol abuse has declined. Even the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration says that "crack presently appears to be a secondary rather than a primary problem."

Since crack is so much cheaper than more traditional forms of cocaine or even marijuana, the majority of crack users are black teenagers, the current scapegoat for a deteriorating society. As the *Chicago Tribune* recently put it, "A new class of people has taken root in America's cities.... Its members don't share traditional values of work, money, education, home and perhaps even life." The politicians who are really responsible for the lack of "work, money, education, home" in our cities have created the crack uproar to take the heat off themselves. The music industry swallowed the bait hook, line and sinker.

You can't tell kids to "Just Say No" unless you give them something to say yes to. A real education. A meaningful job. A decent place to live. That's a life you can insist that people get high on. ■ *Rock & Roll Confidential is a music newsletter available for \$18 a year from Dept. ITT, Box 1073, Maywood, NJ 07067.*



# Peggy Sue

Continued from page 16

become anyone else, either, because the dream to which she returns lacks the conflicts informing either the era of Peggy Sue's adolescence or that of her adulthood.

Peggy Sue got married at a crucial juncture for American women, at a point when domesticity itself (and housework especially) was being turned into a consumer supermarket, community into a suburban commodity, marriage itself transformed from a social contract to an individual design for happiness. She presumably raised her kids during the heyday of feminist organizing. The same period when Coppola made *The Rain People*: the story of a disoriented woman disillusioned by false promises of middle-class womanhood. As an adult, Peggy Sue quavers at marital separation, suddenly stripped of identity and forced on her own.

## Coppola's web of nostalgia

But when she's spun back to adolescence, all her adult experience doesn't give her a whisper of a clue to an alternative road to

personhood. Caught in the web of nostalgia, she doesn't seem to notice. But viewers can't miss the social construction of her femininity, as she chats with her girlfriends who think Charlie is the cat's pajamas, or as her mother murmurs spacially to her, "Be a good girl—cheerful, perky..." The social shallowness of her community is underscored by the hypertheatricality of the staging, the cinematic flourishes and the characters who overdefine themselves into stereotype at every turn.

Rumor has it that the original, downbeat

ending of *Peggy Sue Got Married* was revamped (by scriptwriting team Jerry Leichtling and Arlene Sarner) with an eye to the box office. But is this a happy ending? Peggy Sue looks into an empty future with a husband who had to be faced with her death in order merely to come up with the same platitudes and promises he reeled off as a kid.

IN THESE TIMES NOV. 5-11, 1986 15  
It's as if Coppola tried to make a mainstream romance, and came up against the limits of the dream on which it was based. Coppola has recreated an imaginary past on which Peggy Sue's grim present is firmly grounded, and has turned an elegant piece of fluff into something that sticks in your teeth after you leave.

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## CALENDAR

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50c each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of ITT Calendar.

CHICAGO, IL

### November 14

HERS (Health Evaluation and Referral Service) honors two women leaders in the health care community at annual Fall Benefit: Diane Jude, Director of Womencare, and Jenny Knauss, Executive Director of the Illinois Caucus on Teen Pregnancy. Artemisia Gallery 341 W. Superior, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Tickets: \$15-\$60; reservation information, call HERS: (312) 248-0166. This fundraiser will help HERS con-

tinue to provide information and identify resources on health concerns.

### November 14-15

A conference on Women's Changing Role in Nicaragua at Loyola University, Centennial Forum, 6525 Sheridan Road, in the Rambler Room. Friday, 7:30 p.m./Saturday, 8:30 a.m. Speakers: Rosa Carolota Tunnerman, Leonor A. Huper and Joan Uhlman. Sponsored by the Woman to Woman Campaign and Women's Studies Department of Loyola. Call 769-8079.

### November 22

Amparo Ochoa, renowned Mexican folk singer, will perform at Roberto Clemente High School, with Grupo Zazhil. Benefit concert for Sin Fronteras and the Midwest Coalition in Defense of Immigrants. Concert begins at 8:00 p.m. For more information call 226-0819 or 427-2533.

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# PAST TENSE



**F**OR EVERYONE WHO WAS GROSSED out by the vision of a young boy upgrading his parents into yuppiedom in *Back to the Future*, *Peggy Sue Got Married* is a kind of a tonic. And it's a sort of prize for everyone who loved the set design but hated the story of *One from the Heart*, Francis Coppola's earlier attempt to deliver a "valentine" to the American public.

For those who remember Coppola as the artist who delivered dark truths about the American family in *The Godfather* and, earlier still, in *The Rain People*, however, it may look as if he had fallen into a kind of pop-culture drug-spell—a man under the influence of too many teen movies.

But Coppola may not be capable of making a purely plastic pleasure. The very vapidity of *Peggy Sue Got Married* creates its own nagging commentary on the dream the movie spins.

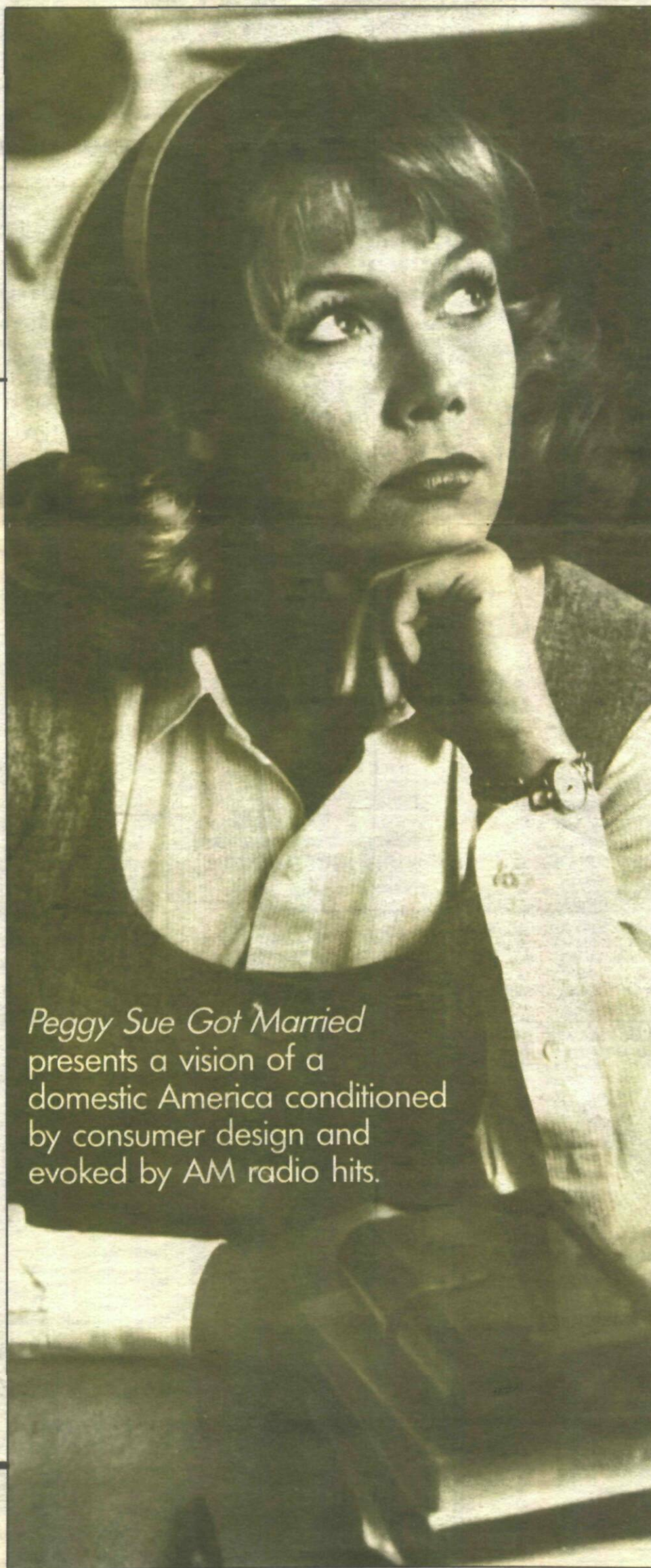
In *Peggy Sue*, Kathleen Turner plays a nervous mom with a disastrously failing marriage on the evening of her high-school reunion. Upon her crowning as queen, she returns magically to her high school days and attempts to change her fate.

Her fate was quite simple: she got pregnant by and married to Charlie, a charming but weak man (played with calculated awkwardness by Nicholas Cage). Charlie's dream was to escape his dad's hardware store by turning himself into Fabian. Instead he became "Crazy Charlie, the Appliance King," pouring his charm into extramarital affairs.

Peggy Sue discovers—in a mist of nostalgia punctuated by jokes revolving around the fact that she remains an adult while others see her as a teenager, that her fate wasn't so bad after all. Charlie's charm is irresistible after all, and her two kids are the payoff for a life that turned out less romantic than she had planned.

## A convenient, canned past

The '50s to which Peggy Sue returns is by now familiar. It's the canned history of pop culture, in which there is no Bomb, no Korea, no McCarthy, no civil rights move-



*Peggy Sue Got Married* presents a vision of a domestic America conditioned by consumer design and evoked by AM radio hits.

By Pat Aufderheide

ment. There are big cars, white crooners, crinoline skirts, crew cuts, ducktails and proms. It's the origin myth of today's popular culture: a halcyon world where brand names have not yet proliferated but the reference points for personal identity and community are celebrity and commodity; a world where that newly emerging category, the teenager, is always at the center of the story.

Peggy Sue's encounters with her past life are bittersweet distillations and memory seems made up of old TV sitcoms and late-night movies. Her mom (Barbara Harris, looking like she's suffering under a permanent Valium glaze) looks so young, in a house made for the Cleavers; her girlfriends so giggly, from a Pat Boone parallel universe; her boyfriend so cute, a would-be teen idol singing a song of himself as a "teenager in love"; her grandparents so cuddly, out of some Disney remake of a Grimms' fairy tale. The media evocations cross generational boundaries, like the media do. When Peggy Sue visits her father's secret lodge, the movie takes a leap into something that looks like an outtake from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

In fact, like David Lynch's Lumberton in *Blue Velvet* (see last week's *In These Times*), this small town exists neither in the past nor the future. It's a timeless media present, in a domestic America conditioned by consumer design and evoked by AM radio hits. You can measure the width and depth of this world in the class nerd (Barry Miller) who turns up at the reunion as a brilliant inventor. Peggy Sue tries to help him when she returns to the past, by telling him about what the future holds: microchips for new-age appliances, running shoes, and...yes!...pantyhose.

Coppola hasn't lost his ability to mount spectacle, and the film dares you to walk out dry-eyed from its evocation of wistfulness. Turner's performance helps there, because with her big-boned boldness and demolishing laugh she constantly gets the joke that she can't really become a kid again. But what's less funny is that she can't really

*Continued on page 15*